CLOUDS AND SUNSHINE;

OR,

TRUTH AND ERROR.

BY

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EDITED BY

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"Bind not thy light-desiring eyes below—
There thy own shadow waits upon thee ever!
But raise thy looks to Heaven, and lo!
The shadeless sun rewards thy weak endeavour.
Who sees the dark, is dark; but turn towards the light,
And thou becom'st like that which fills thy sight."

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TO

HER EARLY AND ESTEEMED FRIEND,

THE LADY ROBERT MONTAGU,

The following Pages

ARE AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED, BY

THE AUTHORESS.

LONDON, *July*, 1854.

PREFACE.

In venturing to bring before the public the following little Work, the Authoress feels herself in need of the greatest indulgence from all who may feel inclined to read it. The very kind encouragement she has received from friends has induced her to print it, in the hope that it may be pleasing and useful to the young; and it may not be uninteresting to them to know, that the writer's primary object was that of rendering it so to a young sister of her own.

She has endeavoured, from serious conviction, to expose the dangerous fascinations of the prevailing error of the day—in other words, Puseyism, as it is so termed—and with the earnest desire to show forth gospel truth in its simple beauty; in the firm persuasion that every talent should be devoted to the glory and praise of Him from whom alone they

are derived. She earnestly hopes that, in venturing her opinions before the public, she will be leniently criticised by those amongst her readers who may differ from her, and that they will believe that she has been solely actuated by sincerity of purpose, and by no uncharitable motive.

LONDON, *July*, 1854.

CLOUDS AND SUNSHINE.

CHAPTER I.

"Oh, where doth human beauty dwell without one taint of earth?
'Tis on the cheek of infancy—still pure as at its birth—
Before the lip hath learned to feign a joy unfelt within,
Before the eye hath shed one tear of penitence for sin."

F. Bayley.

Edith Trevor was the only daughter of Lord and Lady Grey. It had been some matter of regret to her father, at her birth, that instead of a son and heir to his vast possessions, the little stranger was a girl! But it was impossible to witness his young wife's joy, in her newly-acquired treasure, and cast the blight of disappointment on her happiness; besides, there were years, he hoped, before him. Little Edith became the object of her mother's unremitting attention. Morning and evening Lady Grey punctually visited the nursery; and to her Edith first lisped her infant prayer her constant companion, and a remarkably intelligent little being, at five years of age she knew as much as many do at seven. To her, the greatest delight were the mornings spent in her mother's boudoir, where, after a long and happy ramble with her nurse,

in the park and woods of her father's noble domain (Gainsborough Castle), seated in a little chair which Lady Grey had herself embroidered, she was accustomed to begin her infant studies; "line upon line," that sweet and favourite illustration of Scripture for children, forming the principal part, assisted by the magnificent large Bible, with its beautiful pictures and still more enchanting binding, to her childish eyes, which lay usually upon a small table beside Lady Grey's sofa. Then followed spelling and poetry, interrupted only by the thousand questions little Edith loved to ask of her "dear mamma." In the afternoon, she usually accompanied Lady Grey in her pretty low phæton, with its beautiful snow-white ponies, seldom returning to the Castle without a visit to some one or more of her mother's pensioners; for Lady Grey's delight was in doing good, and visiting the poor and needy of the neighbourhood. Much of her leisure she devoted to an Infant School of her own, upon the property; and her little girl frequently gained permission to accompany her in these almost daily visits. Deservedly beloved by all, none could be more zealous than Lady Grey in the dissemination of pure gospel truth; and many a time she might be seen in the humble cottage of the poorest, by the bedside of the sick and dying, dressed in her coarse straw bonnet and camlet cloak, God's word in her hand, as it was in her heart, reading, and speaking words of peace and comfort, where they

were needed. Lord Grey could not but admire her practical piety; and he would often laughingly observe, "You certainly ought to have married a parson," adding, "what a capital curate you would have made Livingstone, my dear Edith!"

Mr. and Mrs. Livingstone were very constant visitors at Gainsborough Castle, the parsonage-house being situated on the very confines of the park. Mr. Livingstone had been at college with Lord Grey, who contracted for him there a very sincere friendship; and, soon after the termination of his career at Cambridge, where he obtained high honours, Lord Grey presented him with the living of Gainsborough. He had married, some few years before his patron, an amiable young lady, with whom he had become acquainted whilst at college; and, at the time my story begins, their family consisted of a boy and girl, the special favourites of little Edith, to whom few pleasures equalled that of having little Cecil and Minnie Livingstone to spend the day with her, at the Castle.

One morning, Edith had completed her lessons better and earlier than usual; she had taken her usual seat by her mother's side, and was relating to her how she and nurse had met Mrs. Livingstone, with John and Minnie, in their walk across the Park, and what a charming run they had had together, when the servant entered, and presenting a card to Lady Grey, had been desired to say, that a lady in a carriage, was at the door, and if it

was too early an hour for Lady Grey to receive her, she would endeavour to call again, being in the neighbourhood.

"Mrs. Vernon!" exclaimed Lady Grey, with great and joyous surprise, "Oh, pray request Mrs. Vernon to walk in. Isabella, one of my oldest, and earliest friends, and of dear Aunt Catherine's too! How singular," she continued to herself, "that she should be in this part of the country, and I did not know it."

"How glad I am to see you, my dear Lady Grey!" said Mrs. Vernon, as the servant announced her; "I could not find myself so near you without hazarding even this most unseasonable hour for calling."

"It is a pleasure, and a most unexpected one indeed," returned Lady Grey, affectionately embracing her friend; "it would have been unpardonable had you done otherwise. But tell me, my dear Isabella, where are you staying? And what brought you to this neighbourhood? Who have we here? Who is this?" and she extended her hand as she spoke, to a little girl, whose remarkable beauty and apparent intelligence attracted her attention.

"No less than my child, and an only girl," returned Mrs. Vernon. "Mildred has often heard me speak of you dear Edith. Does it not appear ages since we met? But I must answer your inquiry, how I came to be in your part of the world, where, however, we only stay till to morrow, and have only

been just three days with a brother of Mr. Vernon's. His father has been dangerously ill, and *very* anxious to see my husband, on our way to Ivy Tower, near Bridgenorth, where my father-in-law resides; we were not sorry to make the Wilderness a *pied à terre* for a day or so; had I known how near my brother-in-law's place was to Gainsborough, I should certainly have written a little word *d'avance* to you, dear Edith; but conceive, it was only at breakfast this morning, I heard you were but a morning's drive."

"Rather more, my dear creature, than a morning's drive," rejoined Lady Grey, "it is full, if not more than, sixteen miles from this to the Wilderness. Just *now* I am unequal to long drives, and this is the reason I have not called there since my return home from our visit to Aunt Catherine."

"Oh, tell me, how is dear Lady Catherine?" said Mrs, Vernon, interrupting her friend; "how long it is since I have seen her!"

"We left her in her usual good health, I am rejoiced to say—the same active gardener as ever; I had a letter from her a day or two ago, begging us to send her some choice cuttings; do you not remember—I think I may call it—her passion for flowers? How happy it would make her, my dear Isabella, to see you at the Grange! Do you recollect the dear old place?"

"Do I not, indeed!" said Mrs. Vernon, and a sigh escaped her as she spoke. Those *were* happy, happy

days! Dear Lady Catherine made every one happy; and Emily—have you good accounts of her?"

"Yes, indeed," replied Lady Grey; "Emily is as well as she is happy, her lot is an enviable one! Devoted to the good of others, she is a most essential aid to her husband in his extensive parish. Both herself and Mr. Montagu were passing some little time with us before Christmas, and we intend, after this troublesome little affair is over" (alluding to her very near confinement), and I am sufficiently recovered "to pay them a visit in return. My brother-in-law has a beautiful Rectory situated on the Banks of the Wye; but you must come and stay with *us*, and we will have Aunt Catherine and the Montagus to meet you."

"Nothing would please me better," returned Mrs. Vernon. "Emily was always a loveable creature, and well suited to be the wife of a clergyman. I have lost sight of you all, so completely, since my marriage, I am quite glad to hear of those whose memory is so dear to me. Mr. Vernon is a great sportsman," she continued, "and Scotland for this reason has great attractions. But where is Mildred? I see that your little fairy has carried her off."

Lady Grey rose, and opening the window, by which you descended by a small flight of steps to her own private flower garden, called Edith aloud. She had, indeed, possession of little Mildred Vernon, and was busily displaying to her, her own property, as she called the lovely spring parterre,

where double violets, primroses of every variety, and polyanthuses, with every choicest shrub and flower of the season, grew in rich abundance. She was busily picking as large a nosegay as her tiny hand could hold, and filling her little wheel-barrow with as many more besides (all to give her little friend); when, hearing her dear mamma's voice, calling Edith, Edith, she bounded away, holding, however, very fast her companion's hand, up the steps, saying, as they presented themselves, "Well dear mamma, here we are!"

"What a pretty contrast our children make!" whispered Mrs. Vernon to her friend, as she stood watching their advancing steps together, hand in hand; and truly was it so! seldom were there to be seen two such pretty little creatures. Mildred Vernon was Edith's senior by a year; she had just attained her seventh birth-day, whilst Edith had only just completed her sixth. Both were delicately made; Edith's clear, transparent complexion, with rich, dark brown, glossy, natural ringlets, hanging luxuriantly about her; her large dark eyes, and sweeping long eyelashes, with most marked delicate features, and cheeks full of dimples, formed a very model of infantine beauty. Mildred's hair, on the other hand, was of the lightest shade of auburn, hanging, like Edith's, negligently, but in profusion also, round her small snowy neck; her eyes, of light hazel, were large and expressive of thought beyond her years; but beaming with an in-

telligence and softness, that none could look upon their brilliant and innocent expression, without an exclamation of "Oh! how lovely!"

"You are very good to my little girl, I see," said Mrs. Vernon, as the children reached the top of the steps; and taking little Edith's hand in hers, whilst admiringly, she stroked her head, "How much your darling resembles yourself, my dear Lady Grey!"

"*So* they tell me," returned her friend, touching the bell as she spoke. "Bring luncheon" she said to the servant, as he obeyed her summons.

"It is already served my Lady," returned the man.

"Then we will repair to the dining-room, my dear Isabella," and Lady Grey put her friend's arm affectionately in her own, and they left the room; the children followed. "Let Lord Grey know Mrs. Vernon is here, and lunching with me," said Lady Grey to one of the servants, as she seated herself at the table; but she had hardly done so before his Lordship himself made his appearance, and expressed, in the kindest and most flattering manner, his pleasure at seeing so old a friend of his wife's.

"But you are not going to run away to-day, surely," said he, when Mrs. Vernon rose from the table, and expressed to her friend a wish to take a short stroll, as had been proposed, in the grounds, previous to returning, adding, "*sixteen* miles, *if it really is so far*, my dear Lord Grey, demands time.

Can it really be half-past three o'clock?" as she looked at her watch, "I should have hardly fancied it so late."

"Is it not provoking, dear Reginald?" interrupted Lady Grey, addressing her husband, "Isabella is leaving the Wilderness to-morrow, and we would so gladly have detained her with us a little; Mr. Vernon's father is ill, and they are hurrying to him in Staffordshire; she promises me later, however, to *dédommager* us."

"I am sorry indeed, for the cause—old Mr. Vernon of Ivy Tower's illness. Nothing very serious, however, I hope," returned Lord Grey; "I used to see a good deal of him when he lived at the Wilderness, and always thought him one of the kindest of beings."

"He has been generally beloved, but I greatly fear his illness at the present moment is a break-up," returned Mrs. Vernon. "At *his* advanced age, one can hardly expect it otherwise; we are as Lady Grey observes, making our utmost speed, to-morrow, to Ivy Tower; my father-in-law having expressed an anxious wish to see my husband, we would not delay a day longer than necessary. I am told your orangery is well worth seeing—do let me see it, dear Edith; and, in the mean time, may I order the carriage round?"

"Mildred Vernon is not going to-day, mamma?" said little Edith to her mother, as she heard the carriage ordered. "Oh, do not let her go *just to-day*, dear mamma!"

Lady Grey and Mrs. Vernon could not forbear smiling at the friendship so immediately struck up between their respective children.

"Little Mildred, my darling," returned her mother, "must go back with her mamma to-day, but is to come again, Edith, and pay you a much longer visit later. Think, dearest, little Mildred would be as sorry to leave her mamma as you would *me*. Would you not my child?" Edith clasped tightly her mother's hand, and with a sweet "*Oh yes*" was at once satisfied. "But, come," continued Lady Grey, we are going to the orangery; you and your little friend can come too."

"But I want to show Mildred my new large doll; may we not go to nurse and see it mamma?"

"Oh, if Mildred likes it, darling."

A gentle "*yes*" was just audible from little Mildred, though quite satisfactory as to there being no compulsion in the way; and the two children ran off together.

In the mean time Lady Grey and her friend, strolled away first to the orangery and conservatory, and then to Lady Grey's pretty flower garden.

"You have a sweet place here, my dear Edith," said her friend as they reached the terrace, which commanded a beautiful view of the fine old Park.

"Yes, it is a dear old place! The great giver of all good has been very gracious in his gifts to *me*, and my happy lot I wish entirely to devote to his service and his praise; may I only live to win dear Reginald

to my views! You know, said she," as she paused and surveyed the beautiful landscape before her, (the trees now clad in their spring dress of brightest and freshest green, while herds of deer gracefully grouped themselves here and there, beneath the deepest shade), "you know I have only one, and *but* one drawback to make my happiness complete, and that is, dear Lord Grey, though very well disposed, has not yet received the truth in its power;" and a tear glistened in Lady Grey's eye as she spoke.

"In this, my dear friend," returned Mrs. Vernon, "we are similarly tried; but we must remember, for our comfort and consolation, that this can be no work of ours, we can only pray. Regeneration is the gift of God; and though we know the Lord accomplishes His saving purposes in different ways, there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all, as St. Paul has it in 2 Cor. xii. 6. The unconverted must feel their want before they will either seek or accept relief at the hand of grace, you know."

"Yes, I know, I feel this; and I do trust my prayers for my dear husband will be heard; and that, in the Church which His right hand hath planted, and in which He has never failed to produce lively tokens of His sovereign grace, he may yet be found a glorious trophy of redeeming love."

Further conversation was interrupted by Lord Grey here joining them. He had been detained by his head gardener, who was desirous of having his

directions about cutting down some trees; but now, taking his wife's arm in his, he walked with her and Mrs. Vernon towards the house, where the carriage already awaited the latter.

"I must ask for my little truant," said Mrs. Vernon.

"I am sure Edith would very willingly rob you of her," laughingly returned Lady Grey, as she despatched a servant in quest of both the children.

They soon made their appearance; but it was necessary to pacify Edith's distress at losing so charming a little companion, by repeating again to her that their separation would be of short duration; Mildred would certainly come back.

"You will not fail to let me hear from you, my dear friend," said Mrs. Vernon to Lady Grey, as Lord Grey handed her into the carriage; "I shall be so anxious to hear all about you."

"Certainly, certainly," returned her friend, as she stood with her little girl at the door, nodding an affectionate farewell."

"You are too tired to-day, dear," said his Lordship, as he led his wife back into the house, after the departure of Mrs. Vernon; "but to-morrow I *must* get you to walk with me, and give me your opinion on the improvements I am making near the Lower Lodge; I can do nothing without you." And he seated himself beside her, as he spoke.

"Well, I *am* very tired to-day; but to-morrow I shall be charmed, dear Reginald—I quite long to

see what you are about there. Little Edith was telling me wonders, the other day, about it all. But tell me, is not Isabella Vernon a nice creature?"

"She appears, indeed, all you have described her," returned Lord Grey, "perfectly unaffected, and natural. I shall be very glad to see her here later, as she proposes. But Mr. Vernon—what sort of man is he? As pleasant as his wife?"

"To be very candid, you must know," returned Lady Grey, "he never made a VERY pleasing impression on *me;* but then, I know but very little of him. His selfishness, if nothing else, in keeping my dear little friend in so bleak and uncongenial a part, as where they have so *long* been living in the North, merely because he is a sportsman; and she so amiable and devoted to him, that she has made herself contented hitherto with blindly following *his* will. It never spoke *very* much with me in *his* favour. But then, dear (and she put her hand playfully in his, smiling as she spoke), few are *so spoiled* by their husbands as *I* am by *you*, and you must not let me prejudice you against Mr. Vernon."

Poor Lady Grey! How little did she know, perhaps she had never acknowledged the truth to herself, that this very defect, selfishness, she was so condemning in Mr. Vernon, was almost as glaring a feature in Lord Grey's own character. The following day, unhappily, too fully evinced this fact!

CHAPTER II.

"She rests in hope, waiting till He
Who died and lives for aye, shall come
To give her immortality,
And call her to her home."

"COME, Edith, let us have a stroll! I think we shall have no more rain; it has poured enough all night."

Wholly unmindful of this exceeding imprudence in her very delicate situation, Lady Grey readily acceded to the proposition—for her husband's wishes were ever hers—and hastened to prepare herself, and ringing for her faithful and affectionate attendant, who had lived with her for years, desired her to give her her bonnet and shawl, as she was going out with Lord Grey.

"Your ladyship, perhaps, is not aware that it has rained incessantly all night; the park will be very damp, I fear," ventured the faithful Norris, whilst obeying her mistress's orders with evident reluctance.

"Oh, nothing to hurt, Norris," replied Lady Grey, "I am not afraid of a little damp; the air, on the contrary, will do me good, and Lord Grey has set his mind so much on my going as far as the Lower Lodge, I could not refuse him. You

must not be so nervous about me; walking, Norris, is essential to me, you know."

"Yes, my Lady; but not, I think, in such very damp weather."

Lady Grey, notwithstanding, descended to the terrace, where she found Lord Grey impatiently awaiting her. They had not, however, gone very far before a drizzling, misty rain overtook them; but having now nearly reached the spot where the improvements were already far advanced, which his lordship so much wished to show Lady Grey, he observed, it would be too vexatious to turn back; and, with the protection of her good cloak and his umbrella, he encouraged her so much to proceed, it was impossible for his amiable wife to make any resistance. And now the sky cleared, and appeared to promise a cessation; at all events, while she viewed the surprise prepared for her in the form of a lovely grotto, which concealed its double purpose of an ice-house, though, as yet, in a very unfinished state. Lady Grey was highly delighted with the plan of it, and she would have remained much longer, damp as was the ground, but for the rain, which now again began to descend. Everything seemed to portend a heavy storm.

"We had better, I think, dear, return by the shrubberies," suggested Lord Grey. "You will find it more sheltered."

"But much farther, dearest Reginald, I fear," ventured Lady Grey, timidly.

"Very, very little farther; and you will certainly find greater protection from the rain."

Lady Grey, as usual, assented. But now the distant thunder could distinctly be heard, and the rain did indeed descend in torrents. They had hardly proceeded half-way, before a terrific clap of thunder broke over their heads, accompanied by a vivid flash of lightning, alarming Lady Grey exceedingly.

"This is most provoking on your account, Edith," said his lordship, as he felt her arm tremble in his, and saw that it was with difficulty she could proceed. "Who could have foreseen such a storm? You are tired, too, love. I see nothing for it, however, but to make our way on as fast as we can, and make the best of it."

And so did poor Lady Grey make the best of it. But, when she reached the Castle, what with fatigue and fright, she fainted, and was carried to her room, where it was some time before the efforts of her attached maid, Norris, to restore her to herself, were crowned with any success.

"Alas, alas!" thought the faithful creature to herself, "if her ladyship had only attended to my words, she never would have gone out *to-day!*"

On reviving, Lady Grey desired Miss Edith might be brought to her to wish her good-night; being unable, as was her wont, to pay her little girl her accustomed visit in the nursery.

Nurse was much struck, on entering Lady Grey's

dressing-room with Miss Edith, in obedience to her ladyship's summons, with the extreme paleness and fatigue depicted in her countenance, and, whilst desiring her to wait, it appeared to her that she seemed unusually anxious to detain little Edith with her. How little did nurse know all that was passing in Lady Grey's mind! Her heart had forebodings she could not account for, as to the issue of this. She feared her premature illness, and her thoughts reverted with the deepest anxiety to her darling child. She had thought to have perceived, infant as she was, the seeds of *early* grace springing up in her little heart, and she had prayed unceasingly for, and watched and watered, with tenderest solicitude, this heavenly plant.

"Edith, my own Edith!" said Lady Grey, as she wished her little girl good-night, parting her hair off her face, and imprinting kiss after kiss on her smooth forehead. "Edith will never forget her hymns and prayers to 'Gentle Jesus,' who loved little children, and loves them to come to Him in prayer! *My* child will remember mamma's words, *never* to forget her Saviour, and all her readings in her Bible, and God will bless my child, my darling child! You may take Miss Edith away, nurse, but return to me quickly; I would say a few words to you."

"Your ladyship has, I fear, done too much to-day," said Budd, on her return to her mistress's presence.

"Perhaps I have *a little*, nurse," quietly returned

Lady Grey. I wished to speak to you, Budd. Life is uncertain; in the midst of it we are in death; more particularly in my situation! I may not recover; and I may—as the Lord, my gracious God, wills! But I believe you to be a Christian woman—one who believes in the Lord Jesus. You have been a faithful attendant to Miss Edith since her birth, and have served me well. I would charge you, nurse, as you have seen my anxiety for my child's soul, as a first duty, never let her omit those things I have taught her ever to be uppermost—never let her forget her prayers, her hymns, and to read her Bible daily. Teach her, too, how very, very precious God's Word was to her poor mamma! I know I may rely on your following my wishes, and that you will take every care of my darling."

Nurse was too much affected by her ladyship's words to say more than reiterate her devoted attachment to herself and little charge.

"I will now remain quite quiet," said Lady Grey. And nurse Budd left the apartment.

The next morning the bells rang merrily in the village of Gainsborough; and on Edith's anxious inquiry as to the cause, she was told they rang to announce the birth of a little brother, but she could not see mamma for a few days—she was too ill.

The greatest joy prevailed at the Castle. But, alas! it was to be of short duration! How often is earthly joy turned into earthly sorrow! Before the morrow's sun had dawned, the lovely and amiable

wife, the doting mother, and exemplary Christian, with her infant son, were *no* more!

In vain did Lord Grey, in his agony of grief, reproach *him*self, and the imprudent walk, as *the cause.* Even the doctors did not escape blame. His sorrow amounted almost to despair. It was impossible to realize his double bereavement!—grief, where there is no power of mitigation!—affliction, unaccompanied by resignation! Who can fully describe the extreme bitterness of the blow to the desolate heart?

The unaffected piety of his departed wife's daily religion had, during the seven years of their married life, shed its sweet halo round Lord Grey, its influence ever swaying him. But the heart had remained unconverted, the will unsubdued, God's sovereignty unacknowledged; and the stroke which now fell on him, snatching, in so unlooked-for and unexpected a manner, a happiness never so fully realized as when the loved voice was silent for ever! The son and heir born, and taken, as it were, to mock his joy at the event—all, all was *too* stunning, *too* dreadful—nature rebelled!

Lady Grey's remains, with those of her infant son, were laid in the family vault. Lord Grey himself attended the last sad offices, but immediately after the funeral left Gainsborough, simply intimating his intention to be some weeks absent from home.

Poor Mrs. Livingstone was inexpressibly shocked, on her return from a visit she had been making, to hear of the melancholy event which had taken place

during her absence, robbing *her* of so kind a friend, and society of so estimable a member as Lady Grey. She lost no time in repairing to the Castle to see poor little Edith, and learn from nurse all the sad particulars. She brought little Minnie and Cecil to wish their young playfellow good-bye, as they were about to leave home and pass a short time with their mamma at Cambridge, with some of Mrs. Livingstone's relations. "Miss Edith will not remain here now, nurse," said she (after having paid a somewhat lengthened visit to the nursery, the children having wandered away to look at some of Edith's treasures), "I suppose? When is Lord Grey expected?"

"The dear child needs a change, ma'am. Mrs. Drummond, the housekeeper, was saying to-day, she supposed, when his lordship returned, Miss Edith would go to her dear ladyship's sister, Mrs. Montagu, for a time; but we know nothing yet, ma'am. I only hope I shall be permitted to remain with the dear child. Oh! what a change it is to us all! what a sad change! and so sudden, ma'am! To think of her dear, sweet ladyship, being taken off! and all in such a moment, as it were! Such a kind mistress!—such a Christian lady, too!—it breaks one's heart to think of it!" And nurse fairly burst into tears.

"Very mysterious are the Lord's dealings, nurse," remarked Mrs. Livingstone, as she prepared to take her leave. "This blow has been a very sudden one to us all! Your dear mistress was indeed a sweet

Christian, and long will her loss be felt by all who knew her. She is now, however, reaping a rich reward for all her labour in her Master's service! May her dear child only resemble her!" Mrs. Livingstone called her children to her, and giving little Edith an affectionate kiss, took her departure.

Week after week passed away, but no tidings reached the Castle of Lord Grey's return. Nurse began to feel anxious at this seeming indifference, not to say forgetfulness, on the part of his lordship about his child. One evening, having put her little charge to bed, she took her accustomed seat in one of the large nursery windows which overlooked the park. She was employing herself in making some slight alterations in Miss Edith's wardrobe, when she was startled by the sound of approaching carriage wheels. It was dusk; but, on looking out, nurse distinctly perceived what she felt convinced, as it came nearer and nearer, to her great relief, could be no other than her master's carriage. The news soon found its way to the nursery. His lordship had arrived!

A few days after Lord Grey's return, nurse was rather suddenly summoned into her master's presence. He had not as yet asked to see his child. It might be from a dislike of reviving the bitter and painful recollection of his sad loss, for Edith strikingly resembled her poor mother; but, in thus selfishly giving way to his grief, he grievously neglected a first duty by his little girl. If his loss was great, what

was that of his child's?—the little orphan, deprived so suddenly of a mother's care!—for six years, too, that mother's great darling!—her sole object! Happy it was for little Edith, that nurse, who had been with her from her birth, loved her as her own child. But though an excellent and pious woman, she was still an uneducated one, and by no means calculated to satisfy or improve an inquiring mind like her young charge. As has already been observed, Edith was a very intelligent little being. It mattered little to her, however, what nurse was; she was too young to know more than that she loved her better than anything or anybody in the world. On being first told by her that mamma was gone to heaven, and to her immediate inquiry whether she would come back again, the tears in nurse's eye, and grave shake of the head, plainly implying the impossibility, Edith burst into tears, and that night sobbed herself to sleep. But how soon are childhood's sorrows forgotten, even the bitterest! The morrow's sun re-assured nurse as to her having done no real harm in acquainting her little charge with her loss—her first trial. The sorest that can happen to a girl had passed over her, and she had hardly felt it. Happy childhood! It was in later years that Edith was to experience what an irreparable loss her's had been. But we have slightly digressed from our subject, and will return to Lord Grey, whom we left having summoned nurse to his presence.

A month and more had elapsed since his lordship

had seen little Edith; *two* almost since his afflictions. As he sat in his usual melancholy reverie, in the library, on the evening in question, brooding over his wretchedness, which everything, since his return home, only more painfully increased by the reminiscences called forth at every turn, his reflections were of the bitterest description. Not only the wife he so deplored, the being who had cheered and was the very life of his home, snatched from him, but the boy—the infant heir to all that vast demesne over which from the window his eye glanced listlessly, taken away as soon as given!—who can say whether, in that moment of despair and desolation, a softer feeling might not have crept over him, and the remembrance that there was yet a being left him, have prompted the sudden ring of the bell? On the appearance of the servant, he desired nurse should attend him in the library.

"How is Miss Edith?" inquired his lordship, as nurse entered, and curtseyed low.

"Miss Edith is quite well, my lord," returned Mrs. Budd; "she takes her daily exercise, as usual, and, I am thankful to say, has not ailed a day since your lordship left."

"I should like to see her to-morrow; and then, I wished to tell you that it is my intention to send Miss Edith immediately to my sister, Lady Fitzwilliam, who is anxious for the present to have the care of her; it will be better for the child to have companions, and there she will have them. Do you

think, nurse, you could get ready by to-morrow to start?"

"If your lordship pleases, Miss Edith and I can be ready, quite ready, at any hour to-morrow."

"Be it so, then," continued Lord Grey; "and, of course you understand, nurse, that if you have no wish to leave Miss Edith, I have no wish to part with you, and so you may remain."

Nurse curtseyed again with respect, and begged to assure his lordship that it would break her heart to part from Miss Edith, with whom she had been from her birth, and loved, as if her own child. Having received, therefore, her orders to leave for Paington Abbey next day, she left the room, and again Lord Grey was left to his solitude and loneliness.

CHAPTER III.

No human ties are left—
Earth's hopes are gone.
He dwells a thing bereft—
Blighted—alone.
F. V. Fosberry.

For some time Lord Grey continued pacing to and fro the apartment, but he was interrupted by the entrance of a servant with a letter. It was from his late wife's only sister. Before, however, giving my readers the contents of this letter, it may be well to give them some little sketch of the writer.

Emily Montagu and Lady Grey had been left orphans at a very early age, and consigned to their uncle's care—a brother of their father's.

Colonel Douglas was a man of large fortune, and spared no expense in the education of his two orphan nieces, of whom he was exceedingly fond. He had married early in life, Lady Catherine Seton, one of the excellent and pious Lord Moreton's daughters, and his choice had been a happy one. She was fitted by every christian virtue and grace to adorn her station; and though Colonel Douglas had never been able to agree with her in religious matters, his love for, and admiration of, her consistency made

him yield to all her wishes, and consult her almost upon everything. Lady Catherine's religion was not mere outward profession, it was to be seen in all she said and did; it beamed in her very look, and few could know her without feeling the influence of, and deriving benefit from, her genuine piety. Her two young nieces had fully supplied the place of children to her, having no family of her own; and in their turn they loved her as their own mother. Edith, the eldest of them, and mother of our heroine, married, early, Lord Grey, a young nobleman to whom she had been attached from her earliest years, and who was distantly related to Lady Catherine; and Emily, three years later, became the wife of a most exemplary clergyman, the Reverend Charles Montagu, a true servant of Christ. Imitating her aunt, she devoted herself to usefulness in her husband's little parish. Mr. Montagu's living was situated on a slight elevation, and commanding on all sides beautiful views of home scenery. The peaceful Wye might be seen wending its way at the foot of the pretty lawn, which gracefully sloped down from the drawing-room windows to its very banks.

It was here in the midst of active duties and employments, congenial to Mrs. Montagu's tastes and feelings, that often her heart rose in thankfulness to the Giver of all Good, for the quiet and peaceful lot he had assigned her.

The melancholy news of her loved sister's death was a most painful and very sudden shock upon her;

the severity of the blow was in no small degree augmented by her having been unable to see her before her death. The news had but only reached her, of her happy accouchment of a boy—the long wished-for heir—and then, the mournful tidings that both mother and infant had been taken away to a brighter and happier world.

In the midst of her grief, however, Mrs. Montagu's unselfish nature permitted her thinking of others. She knew how deeply attached her brother-in-law was to her poor sister. What a void her loss would make to him, and her dear little niece too—poor little Edith! Her Christian heart longed to do something for the little motherless girl.

Mr. Montagu fully participated in this feeling, and, after some deliberation, they agreed together, to lose no time in writing to Lord Grey, to make him the proposition that, under his afflicted circumstances, dear little Edith should be consigned to their care.

It was this letter that we left Lord Grey reading in the library.

"Poor Emily!" thought Lord Grey, as he finished perusing Mrs. Montagu's kind, consoling offer about his child. "But this cannot be, I have already promised my own sister Frances, besides her having a prior claim; Edith will have companions there, and it will be better for her at this moment; she shall go to the Montagu's later; but as he folded the letter he almost felt a gleam of comfort—the style of it was so like that of his lamented wife.

How often will a word of sympathy, when it chances to touch the responding chord of our hearts in a right moment, afford relief when every other effort wholly fails!

The following morning, when Edith opened again her eyes in her large and beautiful nursery, the sun was shining with all the warmth of a lovely vernal sun in the month of May. Child as she was, she saw something unusual was going on. Nurse was bustling about very unlike her accustomed quiet way; and, instead of beginning to dress her before her breakfast, she brought Edith her cup of warm milk in her little bed, telling her to take it, as they were going on a long journey; adding, when she had finished it, she would dress her. With childish glee, Edith did as Nurse Budd advised; only, with the prospect of a journey before her, she could not refrain from clapping her little hands, remembering well the last journey she had made with her poor mamma the previous year to the Grange, which was the name of the residence of Colonel and Lady Catherine Douglas. With all the love of novelty, so characteristic of childhood, she was overjoyed at nurse's news; and, in less than an hour, Edith was dressed, nurse had finished her packages, and they only waited to be summoned to Lord Grey's study to wish papa "good bye." Edith was at the window looking anxiously for the carriage to appear, which she was aware would be the signal of departure. She had just espied it, and in raptures was crying out "Here it is,

nurse, here it is!" when the nursery door opened, and no other than her papa himself appeared to embrace his child. Nurse curtseyed low, and was about to call Miss Edith to see her papa, but he stepped before her to the window, where his little girl was, and before she was aware of his presence, inquired what it was she was in such glee about.

Edith turned quickly round at the sound of her father's voice; she had seen him but once since her poor mother's death, and she showed very evidently how much a stranger he had been to her. The colour mounted to her cheeks, and she hung down her head with every symptom of timidity, if not of downright fear. Nurse came speedily to her relief, excusing her as well as she could, and assuring his Lordship that "Miss Edith had grown very shy of late, she had seen so few people, had been so much confined to her nursery."

"But Edith must not be afraid of papa," returned Lord Grey, in a kinder manner than was his wont; for conscience, that inward reprover of our actions, whispered to him the question, "have you any right to your little motherless girl's affections?" If her shyness distressed him at a moment when even her childish affection would have been indeed a solace, he had only himself to thank for it; he had from selfish regard for his own feelings, totally neglected his little girl, and her nurse had usurped *his* place entirely in her affection.

"Is Edith glad to leave papa?" inquired Lord

Grey, as he lifted her on his knee, and parted her beautiful glossy curls from her forehead. "Will she remember papa?" speaking still more gently and encouragingly to his little daughter, who until this moment had kept her eyes fixed upon the ground.

Reassured by his kinder manner, Edith ventured to look up into his face, and timidly answered, "Yes."

"God bless you, my child!" continued her father, as he again raised her in his arms to carry her down stairs.

Nurse followed close behind, and tears of gratitude might have been seen, by a close observer, gathering in her eyes at the sight of his Lordship's unusual kindness to her little charge—almost the first he had ever bestowed.

"I knew he must love the sweet child," muttered the good woman to herself, "and I am glad of this before we left home, for may be, she'll not come here again a long, long day; and who knows but her dear Ladyship that's gone may then have been replaced by another."

Lord Grey carried little Edith quickly down, and put her into the carriage himself, and having seen nurse take her place by her side, bade her affectionately farewell.

CHAPTER IV.

"Now daisies blush, and wildflowers smile with dew ;
Now shady lanes with hyacinth are blue."

How shall we describe Paington Abbey, where we are about to conduct little Edith Trevor and her nurse, the seat of Sir James and Lady Fitzwilliam? The latter, to whom we have before slightly alluded, was the only sister of Lord Grey ; and, in the first moment of his affliction, he had readily accepted her ladyship's offer to take charge of his little girl. The Abbey, as it was called, was a delightful old place, standing in its own extensive and very beautiful park. The present mansion had been erected on the site of the old Abbey, now a ruin, five hundred years old, but in great preservation, supposed to have been built in the early days of the occupation of England by the Normans. The pleasure-grounds were detached, covering about seventeen acres, including conservatories, a beautiful flower-garden, and two others, called the old and new American gardens. This fine old place had descended, for many generations, in Sir James Fitzwilliam's family, from father to son. He was himself one of the oldest Baronets in the county of Berks,

for which he was likewise a member. Lady Fitzwilliam's extreme beauty, some even whispered the large fortune which she brought him, as Miss Trevor, had won him, some thirteen years back, from the time our story begins, to offer her his hand which was accepted, and they had now three children, to whom we shall introduce our readers. Anne, the eldest, was now between twelve and thirteen; the second was a boy, the darling of his mother, whom he strikingly resembled; and the youngest, little Marion, completed the trio. Lady Fitzwilliam troubled herself little about her children; devoted to *self*, *they* found little place in her thoughts. She was one of those mothers who considered it enough to provide *bonnes*, governesses, and tutors for them; and, so as *they* relieved her of all trouble, they might have *ill* performed those duties—been ill fitted for their important charge; she knew nothing of what passed. Flattered and spoiled by a world to which she was devoted, poor Lady Fitzwilliam had little time, and still less inclination, for any serious reflection. Her eldest girl was not a favourite with her mother; and why? Because Fortune had been less lavish in *her* favours, as regarded beauty, than to her handsome brother Edward, and pretty engaging Marion. Lady Fitzwilliam had more than once been heard to say, that if Anne grew up as plain as she promised, she must hide her at home, as she could never present to the world a girl as *her* child, who was

downright plain. With some, from the fact of every preference being shown her sister, a jealousy would have unavoidably sprung up between Anne and Marion; but in this instance it was quite the contrary. The strongest and deepest affection subsisted between the sisters, an affection which grew with their growth and strengthened with their strength. Anne was of a timid and enduring nature, uniting a firmness of character surprising in one so young; whilst Marion was of a much more impetuous disposition, wanting the mildness and patience that so characterized her sister; but with this impetuosity, which proceeded from a superiority both in talent and genius, there was a goodness and warmth of heart that obtained for her a ready forgiveness, as well as universal popularity. Happily for them, what they wanted in their mother was fully supplied in their governess, Miss Sinclair. Accomplished to Lady Fitzwilliam's content, a point quite indispensable with her ladyship, she united all the elegance of a lady with the method and knowledge of teaching, so necessary in those who have the care and education of the young. Reverses had obliged Miss Sinclair to seek her fortunes in the world; and, applying to Lady Catherine Douglas, an old and valued friend of her mother's, in happier times, she had procured for her her present situation in Lady Fitzwilliam's family. Trials, one after another, the successive loss of both father and mother, leaving her a friendless orphan on the

wide world, had brought her to look to Him who has promised to be a "Father to the fatherless;" and, trusting that word, she had been enabled to do so, and cast her care on him; and, thus sustained, she found comfort in the hour of affliction. Little did Lady Fitzwilliam know, when she accepted Lady Catherine's recommendation, that in receiving the accomplished Miss Sinclair she was giving her children a pious and Christian instructress. She had a perfect horror of what she termed a "serious" person, or serious people; and, had she known her views, would have shrunk decidedly from her with instinctive dread. But we are often called upon to acknowledge "God's ways are not our ways, nor His thoughts our thoughts." In His gracious providence Miss Sinclair was to be the instrument of conveying the *best* of *all* knowledge to her little pupils—the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus; and, in years after, Anne and Marion had both reason gratefully to remember the inestimable blessing of her early religious instructions.

The news of poor Lady Grey's death had cast a shade over the occupants of the school-room at the Abbey. Both little girls affectionately loved their aunt. Only the previous summer, she and their uncle, Lord Grey, and young cousin, Edith, had passed two months at Paington, during which time she had more than ever endeared herself to their young hearts. Anne had been her great favourite, perhaps from her being, in Lady's Grey's eyes, the

neglected one. It had been her pleasure to select *her* as her little companion on every occasion that offered; and Anne's young heart had been warmed with grateful feelings towards her aunt, as the *only* being who (with the exception of her governess) had ever shown her kindness. Her tears, as they fell over the lesson she was learning, on the morning their mother's maid, Graham (who had lived more than twelve years in the family), entered the school-room to acquaint the young ladies with the news of their aunt's death, told that Anne felt she had, indeed, lost a friend—a kind friend.

A few weeks after the announcement of Lady Grey's death, they learned, with mingled feelings of pleasure, that their little cousin was coming to live with them for a while; but when, the following day, Mrs. Graham, as on a previous occasion, presented herself with a message from her ladyship, for the young ladies to prepare themselves, with Miss Sinclair, to accompany her that afternoon, to fetch home in the carriage little Edith from the station, it was with difficulty they could disguise their discomfort and embarrassment at the arrangement. With her usual distant manner, at the hour appointed Lady Fitzwilliam met Miss Sinclair. It was her ladyship's way to treat governesses with the most marked *froideur*, on of her favourite opinions being, that there was not a more dangerous class to be met with, in more ways than one; and that any approach to kindness was only a precedent

to familiarity and freedom! Miss Sinclair rarely received any notice from her ladyship, except when she had friends. She was then *required* to appear in the drawing-room with her pupils, and Lady Fitzwilliam could then approach her with one of her blandest smiles, and request her to play the piano, remarking, at the same time, that Miss Sinclair was a beautiful performer, a first-rate *pianiste*.

"Well," said Lady Fitzwilliam, to her two little girls, as they drove out of the lodge gates, "have you nothing to say on the present occasion, that you sit looking at each other as if you were frightened to death? you grow more and more *gauche* every day," continued her Ladyship, as she cast an angry glance at poor Anne, who did, in very truth, look the picture of terror at being obliged, for any time, to sit opposite her—*to her*, most alarming mother. She coloured deeply, but did not dare reply. Miss Sinclair felt even at a loss how to come to her pupil's relief; but Marion's ready intelligence and affectionate alertness to assist her sister, whenever her aid might be required, adroitly exclaimed, as she at this moment espied her brother on his pretty pony, at no great distance from them, "Here comes Edward!" and in another moment he had put his pony to an easy canter, and was at the carriage side.

Edward was (as we have before observed) his mother's idol; and now the sight of her noble-looking, handsome boy, flushed with his ride, his

pretty brown hair parted carelessly off one side of his high and open forehead, and his countenance so full of life and health, in a moment restored her before disturbed countenance to its usual smiling composure.

"Where are you going, mamma?" said her son as they mutually halted.

"To meet and bring home little Edith, at Charlton, my dear boy," returned his mother; "but how warm you are, Edward," continued Lady Fitzwilliam; "I fear you have over-heated yourself, riding too fast;" and she looked anxiously at him.

"Will you tell me the hour, mamma? I was detained at Summerfield with Hugh and Arthur Vivian, and I am, I know, late. Mr. Stewart will be quite angry, I fear; but I have cantered almost all the way, haven't we, Beedah?" said Edward to his pony, as he patted the beautiful little animal on which he rode.

"It is now a quarter to four o'clock, my dear fellow," returned Lady Fitzwilliam, in answer to her son's question; "but I wish, Edward, you would not heat yourself by riding so fast."

"Well, I must be off now; but, mamma, I want you to ask the Vivians, Hugh and Arthur, to come and stay a few days with me. I must launch my boat papa gave me before Hugh goes to Sandhurst, and we should have such fun on the lake."

"I must speak to Mr. Stewart about it; but you

know I am always sadly afraid of the water. Good bye, my love," said Lady Fitzwilliam; and she made a sign to her coachman to proceed.

"Louisa desired her love to you two," said Edward, nodding to his sisters as he rode off.

The carriage now moved on; and, after one or two remarks to Miss Sinclair, on the dangers of the water in any shape, in her idea, her ladyship took a book from her side, and continued reading until they reached the station. They had not long to wait; the train had arrived, and nurse and Edith were anxiously looking out for Lady Fitzwilliam.

"How do you do, Edith?" said her aunt, as the little girl entered the carriage. "I must ask you, really, to walk home, Miss Sinclair, with one of the children, and give my niece and her nurse place. I cannot bear to be crowded. Anne may very well accompany you, I think," said Lady Fitzwilliam, addressing her governess, who, with much readiness, assented, and, with her eldest pupil, descended from the carriage.

Marion endeavoured, to the best of her powers, to divert and amuse her young cousin as they drove home; and, by the time they reached the Abbey, they promised to be great friends.

CHAPTER V.

"One there is that doth inherit
Angel gifts and Angel spirit,
Bidding streams of gladness flow
Through the realms of want and woe;
Mid lone age and misery's lot,
Kindling pleasures long forgot,
Seeking minds oppress'd with night."

It was about a fortnight after the occurrences of the last chapter, that Louisa Vivian sat at the window, busily finishing an article of poor clothing, which, when completed she was to take herself to a poor pensioner of her mother's, when, to her great distress, she perceived the carriage from the Abbey approaching the house.

"Oh! my dear mamma," she exclaimed, "here is Lady Fitzwilliam coming to see you; *now* you will be detained, and we shall not go to old Margaret to-day; nor to poor Widow Graham; and you see," she continued, holding up the work which was, indeed, almost completed, "it will be so provoking, as I have just done my task!"

"But, my love," replied Mrs. Vivian (who was busily employed cutting out various little objects of wearing apparel for her usual charitable purposes), "I do not at all see why Lady Fitzwilliam's

coming to pay me a visit should interfere with our projected visit to old Margaret and Widow Graham; it depends entirely on yourself; if the frock is finished on my return to you, I shall be quite ready to set out."

Here the servant entered to announce to his mistress that Lady Fitzwilliam was in the drawing-room.

"Should you want anything further to employ yourself," said Mrs. Vivian to her little girl, as she prepared to leave her, "you can practise your music, or get ready some lesson for to-morrow."

Mrs. Vivian had had the misfortune to lose her husband three years previous to the commencement of our story. He had been in the church, zealously devoted to his Divine Master's cause and glory, an ornament to his profession, adored by his parishioners; for *his* ministry was the preaching of the gospel with all its simplicity and fulness. It was with feelings of the deepest anguish, that, for many months, Mrs. Vivian perceived her husband's efforts for his people were far beyond his strength; that his health was evidently and rapidly, too, giving way. She urged in vain the necessity of having an additional curate, or withdrawing for awhile from these arduous duties; and, by traveling, recruit his impaired strength and health.

But Mr. Vivian had peculiar views of his own on this point. His parish was a large one, and though he had one curate, he worked hard himself, entering

into those every-day duties which, unhappily, too many allow to devolve on their *employés*. He considered himself as responsible for the souls of the parish committed to him, to his Divine Lord, and preferred rather to die at his post, and in the exercise of those daily rounds which it was his wont to make, than to relinquish, as he would say, in these trying times of the Church, his charge to any man.

Mrs. Vivian's fears were, indeed, painfully realized. He sank rapidly, after a comparatively short, but severe illness. It was a painful separation; nothing but her sweet resignation of character and sterling piety enabled poor Mrs. Vivian to recover herself at all after this dreadful blow. But she called to mind all their sweet conversations upon trials, and entire submission to the Lord's appointments, and seemed to hear her loved husband still. To remain in the hitherto sweet little parsonage was impossible. Another gentleman had been already appointed in her lamented husband's stead, and Turton, as a residence, in or near the village, would have been insupportable to her; so, after much wise consideration, and making her future plans a matter of prayer for direction, it occurred to her, that with her children, two boys and a girl, left fatherless in the world, having few relations remaining of her own, it might be advisable to fix her residence in the neighbourhood of her late husband's brother, his only surviving one, Sir Hugh Vivian.

With a very slender income derived only from her marriage settlement, Mrs. Vivian, six months after her husband's death, therefore established herself at Summerfield, a very pretty cottage standing in its own little pleasure ground, at less than three-quarters of a mile from Everton, Sir Hugh's seat; and in the three years of her residence in the little cottage where we now find her, she had found no cause to regret the step she had taken.

Sir Hugh's family consisted of a son and daughter; the latter, the eldest, deprived early of maternal care, had resided with a sister of her mother's all her life, her father having been ever averse to either marrying again, or having governesses at home. Every year Emmeline was in the habit of paying her father a visit. Allyne, her only brother, and junior by three years, had a tutor at home.

Sir Hugh Vivian was a peculiar, if not an eccentric man. Very proud and reserved, and difficult of access, nevertheless, under this somewhat stern exterior, his was a noble and a generous heart; he had been sincerely attached to his brother, though he did not conceal his dislike of his "extreme views," as he called them; but at his death, when his sister-in-law established herself in his neighbourhood, he evinced more kindness than either she expected, or those who were well acquainted with him would have given him credit for. And she found in him a valuable friend for her two boys—of whom she was justly proud.

Hugh, the eldest, so named after his uncle, and just fourteen, according to his advice, had been for the last two years at an excellent school in preparation for *Sandhurst;* for, as his early desire—much against his poor father's wish—had been for the army, his uncle had strongly advised Mrs. Vivian to yield, and educate him for that profession, generously offering to pay for him at Sandhurst, and, furthermore, should he turn out well, give him his commission. She had always in her heart set him apart for the church, and many a prayer had been inwardly breathed by her, that she might have the joy of some day seeing her dear boy follow in the steps of his father. But we have digressed from our subject, and must return to where we left Mrs. Vivian, about to descend to see her visitor.

"How kind this is of you, my dear Lady Fitzwilliam, I am delighted to see you," said Mrs. Vivian, on entering the drawing room, and advancing to meet the former.

"I had no idea you had returned," and Lady Fitzwilliam extended her hand to Mrs. Vivian as she spoke, "until ten days ago when Edward told me he had seen your two boys. I have been intending ever since to pay you a visit; but the arrival of my little niece, Edith Trevor, my poor brother's child, and other things, however, have prevented my doing this earlier."

"Poor Lady Grey! ah! how very melancholy her death was! and unexpected too, was it not?" inquired Mrs. Vivian.

"Most unexpected, indeed; for though my sister-in-law was never strong, the first intelligence of her having so well got over her confinement, ill-prepared us" returned Lady Fitzwilliam, "for the next post, bringing the sad news of my brother's loss, in the death of both mother and infant. It has been a severe blow to him."

"And his little girl," resumed Mrs. Vivian, "I remember well last summer, when I had the pleasure of meeting Lady Grey at Paington Abbey; what a darling she appeared to be of her mamma's—she must feel her loss sadly."

"Edith is so very young," replied Lady Fitzwilliam—"not yet seven; and it is now nearly *three* months since my sister-in-law died. At her age, grief," my dear Mrs. Vivian, "is not of long duration. She appears perfectly reconciled and happy. By-the-bye, I wanted to ask if I am rightly informed that you already know our new clergyman at Everton; I was not myself at church last Sunday, but I am told he is quite a dissenter."

"*You were*, indeed, *mis*informed," quietly rejoined Mrs. Vivian, "Mr. Graham's views are, *perhaps*, 'LOW CHURCH,' as it is termed—to *my* mind better named *evangelical*."

"And what do you call *low Church*? I really am puzzled with so much high and low Church, and intend to keep myself very clear of either party," said Lady Fitzwilliam, "though I do not at all admire those strict people who think it so *very* sinful to go to a ball, or give a dinner; but as to *rising*

early, and daily going to a cold miserable church, winter and summer, before breakfast—so much religion would make me quite ill—I never could bear it."

"It is to be regretted," thoughtfully and seriously returned Mrs. Vivian, without saying all she might have felt at this last remark of Lady Fitzwilliam, "*greatly* to be regretted, that there is so much difference just now in religious opinions; for my own part, I dislike, especially, the term high or low Church; there is but one Church after all, and that is the Church of Christ. All these who zealously and affectionately act up to the doctrines of his Gospel, comprise that Church, be they dissenters or Churchmen. Mr. Graham is a Churchman, and by his consistent walk, is a very bright ornament of the established Church—the Church of England. He was much esteemed by my dear husband, for whom, during his last illness (a momentary shadow crossing her calm features, at the painful recollections this recalled), he officiated; and it was most kind of my brother-in-law appointing him to Everton; but," added Mrs. Vivian, with a half-smile, "Mr. Graham has no daily service, dear Lady Fitzwilliam."

"How is Sir Hugh," inquired her ladyship, very glad to turn the subject, by no means interesting to her. "I was sorry to hear from Sir James that he had been ill; indeed, I intended to-day calling at Everton on my way home from you. Is Miss Vivian just now at home?"

"Indeed no; my niece is staying with Lady Vansittart, a sister of her mother's, with whom she generally resides. Her father was to have joined her a week since. A severe attack of cold, however, has prevented him; in a few days no doubt he will be quite himself again; and I hope later dear Emmeline will return with him. She pays her father a visit summer and winter, which is a great pleasure to us all. My Hugh is going with his uncle, who is undertaking most kindly to settle him at Sandhurst. It will be a trial to me, parting with him, and to a public school; but, after all, only a preparation for a later and sadder parting, when, as his chosen profession is the army, he will probably be called to leave us on foreign service."

"Oh! I do pity you, my dear Mrs. Vivian; I could never hear of my darling boy, Edward, entering the army. He must get a seat in the House; I could never bear his leaving me. But this reminds me," said Lady Fitzwilliam, rising as she spoke, "of his request; and perhaps Sir Hugh's indisposition, by detaining him at Everton a few days longer, may favour it. Edward is most anxious to try his boat, a new one Sir James has given him, on the lake, and commissioned me to ask you for his two friends, your nice boys, to pass a few days with us at the Abbey. I do not very much approve it, I will own, for I have the greatest horror of water-parties; but, dear fellow, he is so proud of his father's present I cannot refuse him, so try to keep

my alarm to myself. You, too, and your little daughter, must not be strangers, Mrs. Vivian; you will come and see us whilst Hugh and Arthur are with us."

And so saying, Lady Fitzwilliam, with repeated assurances from Mrs. Vivian of the pleasure it would give herself and children, departed.

CHAPTER VI.

"The smile that knew no mean eclipse,
But, ever round those graceful lips,
In brightest welcome play'd for thee,
In moods of unaffected glee."

How little did Lady Fitzwilliam think, as she made the *detour* to Everton, which she did to inquire for Sir Hugh Vivian, and thence drove slowly home, of the sorrow—the agony of grief that there awaited her. It has been said, "Sorrows cast their shadows before us." Who can tell what a day, what an hour may bring forth? and so Lady Fitzwilliam proved it. She only re-entered her spacious lodge gates to witness consternation and dismay on every countenance. Mr. Seaford's carriage, the medical man who attended the family, was at the door as her ladyship drove up. Servants appeared running in all directions. Lady Fitzwilliam hastily alighted, and advanced hurriedly into the hall, anxious to ascertain the cause of the alarming mystery all she saw conveyed to her mind. She was met by her son's tutor, Mr. Stewart, who had himself undertaken the task of conveying, with as much caution as was possible, to her ladyship the account of the melancholy and truly tragical event that had taken

place during her brief absence. Every one but himself had shrunk from being the first to announce to the mother—whose very life was bound up in her son's—that *that* son she had left in the morning, so blooming with health and vigour, was now a corpse! . . . . With a countenance pale with emotion, Mr. Stewart requested her ladyship—who was preparing to ascend the stairs—to give him a few moments in the library, ere she did so.

"What has happened? What is the matter, Mr. Stewart?" hastily inquired Lady Fitzwilliam, before the former could close the door of the apartment into which she had passively allowed him to lead her. "Where is Sir James?"

"Sir James is at home, my dear madam, and by the bedside of his son and yours, where, if you will permit, I will conduct your ladyship. Edward has"—he would have proceeded, but she was gone.

Lady Fitzwilliam had caught, with *that* name, the idea that something was wrong with Edward; the *bare* suspicion of whose danger, gave wings to her feet, and a moment had hardly elapsed, before she had reached her idolized boy's apartment. Voices were heard in that room; but she heeded them not. Lady Fitzwilliam pushed open the door—already ajar. Sir James and Mr Seaford advanced to meet her, anxious to spare her the sight that awaited her; but she passed by them. . . . And there, extended on the bed, lay her beautiful boy—lifeless. His hair being matted on each side of his fine fore-

head; his limbs, so lately full of activity and strength, now cold and stiff;—the eyes, but a few hours since beaming with intelligence, now closed for ever!

With despair depicted on every line of her countenance, Lady Fitzwilliam grasped Mr. Seaford's arm, as the horrible truth for the first time flashed across her, and with a voice hardly intelligible, with almost imploring accents, she inquried, "Is there NO hope? Can you do *nothing* for him—for me?"

"It would be wrong in me, my dear madam to deceive you. It has been already my painful duty to inform Sir James any efforts in this case are utterly useless. Life has been extinct some little while—indeed must have been so from suffocation before removal from the water.

With one piercing shriek, as Mr. Seaford uttered these words, Lady Fitzwilliam fell senseless on the ground; from which she was conveyed by Sir James, assisted by Mr. Seaford, to her own apartment.

The Abbey had, indeed, that morning, been the scene of a most melancholy catastrophe. Edward had gained his tutor's permission to make a first trial of his boat on the spacious lake, in which, in one part, was a very dangerous current; he had most unaccountably over-reached himself, in turning to reply to Mr. Stewart, who, on the opposite bank, perceiving his pupil nearing the part prohibited, hallooed to him to return. At this moment one of

Edward's oars slipped from his hold, and as quickly was his arm outstretched to lay hold of the receding oar—as he fancied—but the current was strong—he lost his balance—it was but the affair of a moment. And Mr. Stewart had the unspeakable horror of seeing his unfortunate pupil sink to rise no more. His cries for immediate help attracted two of the gardeners to the spot, and they succeeded, with himself, in finding, at last, the body—which rose twice—only, alas! on landing it, to find death had seized on its youthful victim.

"Rash boy! had he only waited for me, before he entered that fatal boat!" burst from poor Mr. Stewart's lips, as he gazed on his young pupil's lifeless form.

The medical man, who was immediately sent for, could do nothing. Of this Mr. Stewart had been previously, too surely, convinced. Sir James was only just returned from his ride, as the lifeless body of his only son was conveying to the house. He was a kind father, and though accustomed to see comparatively little of his children, besides being a man who demonstrated rarely much feeling, he could not witness the melancholy sight that now met his eye, without considerable and evident emotion. His first thought (when the fearful truth, which he endeavoured hopefully, at first, not to believe, became too startling a reality, that Edward was indeed dead) was for his wife. Heartless as she was to his other children, selfish and indifferent as she

was to him, he knew her affection for her son amounted almost to idolatry, and that the shock to *her* would be dreadful. He had not courage to meet her, and break the truth; he requested Mr. Stewart to do this for him, gently to do it, and discreetly prepare Lady Fitzwilliam for what could no longer be concealed. Her piteous shriek which followed Mr. Seaford's mournful shake of his head and few words, Sir James was fully prepared for, and it was a relief to him that the worst had been told her; but so little sympathy existed between them, that to convey her to her own apartment, and consign her to the care of her own attendant, was all he could do.

It would be difficult to describe the agony of this proud woman at her sudden bereavement. She gave herself up to the most uncontrolled grief, refusing to see either husband or children; but Sir James was too well accustomed to his wife's manner of acting, on far—far less trying occasions than the present, to feel surprised. On *him* now devolved the last sad offices—the melancholy, but necessary preparations for the interment. The vault, the gloomy family vault, opened to receive poor Edward's remains; and all that was left to those who mourned his early doom was the remembrance of his amiable and sweet disposition. He had been a universal favourite, as well as one of the Abbey's brightest ornaments. His sisters, Anne and Marion, could ill restrain their first burst of natural grief at their

young brother's sudden removal; but, taught submission to God's will by their excellent governess, this, once over, they yielded to Miss Sinclair, who recalled to their attention little Edith, their young cousin, so lately deprived of a devoted mother; gently reminding them, that without some forgetfulness on their part of themselves, in their present affliction, *her* young spirits would receive a very prejudicial chill. With all the innocence of her age, this little creature had made herself completely at home, from the first, with her cousins and Miss Sinclair, to whose especial care she had been consigned on her arrival, by her aunt. Things, therefore, gradually resumed the usual routine at Paington Abbey, Lady Fitzwilliam only excepted. Confining herself entirely to her own apartments, she would receive no one, not even her most intimate friends. Her former vivacity transformed itself into a haughty melancholy, and none were permitted to intrude upon or share her grief. Her health, after a few months, gave way, and her own prescribed indulgence of, and abandonment to, such uncontrolled sorrow, told very sensibly in her altered appearance. She was obliged, at length, to give in most reluctantly, and go to London, to consult her own physician, who failed not to recommend immediate change of air and scene. During her ladyship's absence, Miss Sinclair and her young pupils interchanged very constant visits with their amiable neighbours at Summerfield.

Many and many a pleasant ramble the children enjoyed together, and nurse Budd (whom we must not entirely forget to name) had reason to rejoice in the healthy and invigorated appearance of her dear little Miss Edith, now quite a different being since her arrival at Paington.

"We will vary our walk this afternoon, I think," said Miss Sinclair, to her little trio, as they were returning home one lovely summer's afternoon, in the beginning of August, "and call at Summerfield."

This proposition received a joyful assent from the little party, and they were received by Mrs. Vivian with her usual kind welcome. They found both her and Louisa, however, about to start for their accustomed walk; and as Miss Sinclair would by no means allow of Mrs. Vivian's deferring it to a later moment, it was agreed they should join her.

"*We* were going to Everton," observed Mrs. Vivian, "you do not fear it being too far?"

"By no means," returned Miss Sinclair; "but even so, we can but accompany you half way. The sun is beginning to be much less powerful; we shall all enjoy a walk with you, my dear madam, this lovely afternoon, exceedingly."

It needed but a glance at the young faces present fully to confirm Miss Sinclair's assertion; and, it being thus agreeably settled, they set out.

It was, indeed, a very lovely day. Nature was in her richest dress; the trees, with their massive foliage, cast their pleasant shadows here

and there on the road; the birds, singing their melodious songs of rapture, and now and then the distant lowing of cattle, with the various hums peculiar to the country; the very air scented with the fragrant smell of flowers, and the azure vault of heaven, with its distant golden tints, preparing the couch into which the sun, notwithstanding its then brilliancy, threatened a little later to sink—all bespoke a glorious summer's day.

The young people proceeded merrily on their way, leaving Mrs. Vivian and Miss Sinclair to follow more leisurely.

"What news have you of Lady Fitzwilliam, since her departure? Is she beginning to be more reconciled to her affliction?" inquired Mrs. Vivian of her companion, after they had proceeded some little way.

"Indeed, my dear madam, the few lines I received a day or two since, from Graham, her ladyship's maid," returned Miss Sinclair, "were by no means satisfactory. The doctor recommended traveling, she said; but nothing has been decided as yet. Her ladyship continues much in the same state. Edward's death was a cruel blow to Lady Fitzwilliam, for she was deeply wrapped up in him. It is difficult to bear God's chastening hand when the heart is a stranger to Him."

"Truly, my dear Miss Sinclair; even his own children find their faith greatly tried in unqualified submission to His sovereign will. I have learned

this by my own experience. It was a favourite saying of my dear husband's, 'God never did anything at a wrong moment, or in a wrong way,' meaning to imply, His most mysterious and painful dispensations were all wisdom; and, oh! if I had not felt a conviction of *this*, when called myself to submit and part with what was my *all* on this earth, I never could have borne his loss."

At this moment, Louisa Vivian came running back, exclaiming, "Dear mamma, here comes Emmeline, Allyne, and Uncle Hugh."

"I see, my love," said her mother, as a turn in the road brought immediately in view her brother-in-law, his son, and daughter, riding toward them.

"We shall not now go to Everton, mamma?" inquired Louisa; but, before Mrs. Vivian could reply, Sir Hugh and his daughter had reached them.

"How do you do, dear aunt Louisa?" began her niece, Emmeline; "I hope you were not thinking of paying us a visit?"

"Indeed I was," said Mrs. Vivian, as she returned her niece's shake of the hand, "not having seen you for some days; besides, I had a request to make of *you*," and she turned to Sir Hugh as she spoke. "I want you to give your recently-become vacant almshouse to my poor Widow Graham; she has for thirty years, you know, maintained herself most respectably, as washerwoman at Everton, but is now grown so infirm as to be quite incapable for work, her eyesight being almost gone. It would be a very

great charity to enable her to end her days in a little peace and comfort. You are so kind, Hugh, I feel you will not refuse me."

"The late inhabitant died a week ago, and many an applicant have I had," returned Sir Hugh; "but as I have as yet given my promise to none, I can have no objection to your *protegé* becoming its new occupant; so, by all means, let Widow Graham take possession."

Miss Sinclair had walked on with her pupils, Anne, Marion, and little Edith, whilst Mrs. Vivian stood talking with Sir Hugh.

"Is that the Miss Fitzwilliams' Governess?" inquired Emmeline of Louisa, as she stroked down her pretty horse's coat.

"Yes," said Louisa, "and she is such a nice person, they are so fond of her!"

"And that pretty little girl with them," said Allyne, as he drew near his cousin and sister, "who is she?"

"Little Edith Trevor—she lives at Paington Abbey now, since she lost her mamma—Lady Grey—who, you know, was here last year. Lord Grey is Lady Fitzwilliam's brother."

"O yes! I remember," returned Emmeline, "how very like she is to her mamma. One of the Fitzwilliams is pretty, too, I think," continued she, "but they always look so shy and reserved, I never can make out how they are such great friends of

yours. Lady Fitzwilliam, too, is such a disagreeable person, Aunt Vansittart cannot bear her."

"But just think, dear Emmy, what severe affliction she is in just now; poor Edward! of whom she was so fond! As for Anne and Marion, you do not know them, or you would never think them stiff; they are, on the contrary, most kind and good-natured."

"Well, at least, Louisa, you know how to defend your friends," said Allyne, who with his sister could not help laughing at his cousin's eloquence.

Sir Hugh here interrupted; and Mrs. Vivian, after making her niece promise to come over to Summerfield in a day or so, proceeded to join Miss Sinclair.

"I suppose papa has told you Aunt Hetherington has been intending every day, since her arrival, to call on you, dear Aunt Louisa? but the weather has been so hot, she has delayed it; however, *I* will bring Ethell and Adelaide to see you. *We* are not so afraid of *heat*," said Emmeline, as with a gentle touch of the whip, she put her well trained horse into an easy canter.

CHAPTER VII.

"The burdened future leave calmly to *Him*,
Who counts and knows our wants;
Who feeds the ravens, and the fowls of air,
And clothes the lilies—which, nor toil, nor spin—
With peerless beauty."

"Is Miss Vivian much older than you, Louisa?" inquired Anne, as soon as her friend joined them.

"My cousin Emmy is sixteen, there is not quite three years' difference between us."

"And her brother," said Marion, "he is younger of course?"

"Allyne is my own age; I was thirteen last May, and his birth-day was last month," replied Louisa.

"How different they are."

"Not at all alike," observed Marion.

"That is true; Allyne is remarkably handsome, and Emmeline cannot be termed pretty, but she is very amiable—you cannot think how amiable she is!" said Louisa.

"I think you are called, do you know," said Anne. "I fancied I heard our names, and we have walked so fast we are almost out of your Mamma's sight, and Miss Sinclair's."

It was true, Miss Sinclair had, as Anne thought, called to them; it being now decided by Mrs.

Vivian, that, having reached a lane which would immediately take them to Repton, and the object of their visit to Everton having been gained by meeting Sir Hugh, they had better at once proceed to Widow Graham's cottage. A few fields divided from each other by stiles, and one or two moderately long lanes, the hedges on each side of which were perfectly laden with wild flowers, to the delight of little Edith, who stopped here and there, with exclamations of delight, to gather a nosegay for nurse, brought them at length to the widow's lowly thatched cottage.

"How are you to-day, Mrs. Graham?" asked Mrs. Vivian, as she and her little party entered the modest habitation.

The poor old woman was seated in her old arm chair, by the fire-place, her eyesight so dim, as to be scarcely able to distinguish the person addressing her; while her young grandson, a lad of about twelve years of age, was seated at her feet, reading from a large Bible he held on his lap.

"Very glad to see you, ma'am, Mrs. Vivian and Miss Louisa; get up Johnny, get up; give a chair to the ladies; ah, ma'am, you have brought me other ladies—who are they Johnny?" half whispered the poor old creature to her grand-child, "getting very bad here, ma'am," said she, pointing to her sight, "hardly can see anything."

"The Ladies from the Abbey, grandmother," returned the boy.

"Be seated, pray be seated, ladies," and his

grandmother, began feeling for her stick or crutch to rise and find seats for her visitors, but they anticipated her, by assuring her they had found themselves chairs without Johnny's aid.

"I have not seen you ladies to thank you for the nice gown and jacket you pleased to make me," began widow Graham; "but I do thank you now, and He who sends me every blessing, and so much more than I deserve. Johnny was just a reading me out of your beautiful Bible, ma'am—Mrs. Vivian, you gived me, and that I've read many and many a time before my eyes got so bad, and it was a nice Word!"

"What was it Mrs. Graham?" inquired Mrs. Vivian.

"Ah! one of King David's Psalms, ma'am, about they that seek the Lord never wanting any good thing; oh, it is a nice promise that, and I am sure it is true in my case, ma'am, for I wanted a gown very much, and God sent it me. I thank you very much, ladies."

Anne and Marion both expressed the pleasure they had had in making it; and, with Miss Sinclair, made her understand that they would now often visit her, and help Mrs. Vivian in providing for her wants.

"Well," resumed Mrs. Vivian, "but I have some very good news for you—better than, perhaps, you could have expected. You remember how much you wished, the last time I saw you, to get into one of Sir Hugh's almshouses?"

"Ah! to be sure, ma'am, and I did so, indeed; but the one Peggy Morant had—she that's just dead—is, I hear, promised to Nancy Harris. Miss Vivian's given it to her, I am told; she's little James Harris's mother—Miss Vivian's page. I sent my Johnny to Everton to speak to Miss Vivian, but he only saw Mrs. Grantley, the ladies' maid, and she told him 'twas no use asking, as her young lady had got her papa to give it to Nancy Harris. In her ladyship's time, when Miss Vivian was quite a little girl, many's the time I have spoken to my lady, and when my husband died—now thirteen years last April, and this is July—her ladyship was, ah! like you, ma'am. Oh! Lady Vivian was a nice, kind lady; but Miss Vivian's not over-condescending. Many's and many's the time her mamma's come to see me in my poor cottage, and many's the kindness she's done me."

"Well, I am very glad," replied Mrs. Vivian, "to be able to tell you that Mrs. Grantley was quite wrong in saying that Sir Hugh had given the vacant almshouse to Nancy Harris. We have just met Sir Hugh, and he, on the contrary, gives it to you; so we were all anxiety to come immediately to you, and give you this good news."

"Ah! ma'am—Mrs. Vivian, this is good news. God bless you! Just like you, ma'am. Oh! this bees good news! Johnny and I owes it all to you, ma'am. My rent was coming due, and I was a thinking, yes, and I was telling my boy, there—

wasn't I, Johnny?—how as I never could go on paying this rent; for you sees, ma'am, when I could, I worked honestly and earned a bit; but since the Lord has pleased to make me such a poor helpless thing I lives on the parish money, and it's but little. But, ah! the Word was true; and that Word I've always found true. I was beginning to look down, and feel down. It wasn't right; for poor Nancy Harris has a hard world, too, to get on in; but I was beginning to be a bit sorry it hadn't been my luck; for I said, 'She has her sight, and her boy earns a trifle, too, for her.' But 'twasn't right, and I know'd it; and I got God's book, and Johnny read me the Word I told you, ma'am, and see how the Lord has not forgot me. I thank Him first, and you, ma'am."

"Well, I am very pleased for you, Mrs. Graham, for I do believe that you seek the Lord; and none, you see, as you have been reading yourself, ever have reason to repent their putting their trust in Him. It is well to look round sometimes at our neighbours, when we think ourselves very badly off; and, in comparing our lot with others, we shall see that God has left us many blessings with our trials. See, there is your neighbour, a Christian neighbour, too, at Nutleigh, Margaret Lindsay; her daughter, Mabel, is a cause of much trial to her. We will now take our leave of you, for it is getting late. I shall bring you my niece, Miss Vivian, to see you, and you will see that she is by no means proud. I

hope, my dear Miss Sinclair," said Mrs. Vivian, as she rose to leave the cottage, "that I have not kept you too long."

"Not at all, not at all, my dear madam," returned Miss Sinclair, "the visit has been a great pleasure to us."

Anne and Marion re-echoed their governess's words.

"Does Johnny go to school?" inquired Mrs. Vivian, as she was about to depart.

"Oh, yes, ma'am! though he is not able to be over punctual; for he has got a bit of work with farmer Lees, attending his cows, and that takes him some of his time in the day; but he gets Sundays to Mr. Graham's school, and that's what I cares for more than all, ma'am."

"I am glad of it; and that he is able to get you something, be it ever so small," said Mrs. Vivian, putting her hand on the latch of the door. "Good bye, Mrs. Graham; we shall soon pay you another visit."

"May I give that little boy something?" whispered little Edith to Miss Sinclair, by whose side she had been standing, attentively listening to all that passed during the visit to Graham's cottage.

"Yes, certainly, if you have anything with you, my dear little girl," answered her governess.

Edith immediately drew from her pocket a tiny purse, and from it a shilling, which she gave Johnny.

Anne and her sister contributed also a trifle, and the little party left.

On their reaching Summerfield they parted, each and every one much delighted with their afternoon's visit. Though it had detained them longer than they had anticipated, it furnished them with much interest, circumstances having prevented their visiting Widow Graham before.

CHAPTER VIII.

"A feigned religion, that, with fitting art,
—— for each expression finds
Some flatt'ring counterpart, or creed, or charm—
'Tis man's religion, from the root of sin."

MONTGOMERY.

"You look pale this morning," said Lady Hetherington to her daughter, Lady Ethell Forster, as she took her place at the breakfast table with the rest of the party; "I am afraid the mornings are just now too hot for such long walks before breakfast, my love."

"By no means, mamma," answered her fair daughter, as she laid a small bouquet of fragrant roses, with a moss-rosebud, whose sweet odour quite surpassed the rest, on her mother's plate; "I enjoyed the walk exceedingly, and the services in which I joined still more," and a slight and rather haughty smile curled her aristocratic lip.

"Where has Ethell been?" inquired Sir Hugh of his sister, Lady Hetherington, as he helped her to coffee.

"To church, uncle," replied Lady Ethell, "which Addy and I never omit at home. But you were not aware, perhaps," she added, with somewhat of irony in her tone, "of your privileges of daily morning

and afternoon prayers, a little less than three miles off at Nutleigh—is not that the name of the village, Emmeline? What a picturesque little church you have there," she continued, "and the fine old abbey or priory which we passed! Just the sort of place I should like to live at. Who lives there?"

"Oh, you have both been to Nutleigh, have you!" said Sir Hugh to his two nieces, "and before breakfast, too! and to church! Well, well; in my time, there was no church-going before breakfast; there were none of the new-fangled absurdities of the present day. Much church talk, and much church going! People went honestly to church on Sundays, and good people attended to their home-duties, and they were none the worse for that."

Here Emmeline and Lady Ethell exchanged glances, while Sir Hugh continued, "But now there is Eustace Priestly, living at the Priory, at Nutleigh."

"A son I suppose of old Mr. Priestly?" interrupted Lady Hetherington.

"The very same, our father's good old friend, Stephen Priestly's son. You remember them well, Horatia, I am sure; excellent good creature, was Mrs. Priestly, in our time!"

"Well, young Priestly could not have had a better example to follow, than his good father. We always, you know, attended Nutleigh Church in my father's time, and I retained our old pew there, after poor Stephen's death, and I still have it; but Eustace, who succeeded to the living, has introduced such

new ways, such twisting and turning to the altar—which, by the way, he took to ornamenting with candles and flowers. He has applied to me to have my pew, with others, altered, pretending that the pews should all, properly, be open seats, and all like each other. Now, though I take no pride with me to church, I have no notion of having my very comfortable pew rendered most uncomfortable and cold, just to have church appearance of being no better off than my poorer brethren! I therefore refused—to Eustace's annoyance; but I never left the little church until he pushed things farther, and wanted me to subscribe to the putting up an altar-piece (instead of the good old one of 'The Last Supper'), that of 'Christ giving the Keys to St. Peter!' attaching thereto some nonsensical notion of apostolical succession. He shuts himself up in the Priory; looks almost, if not quite, like a Roman Catholic priest; and, very much to the annoyance of many of the parishioners, is, I hear, endeavouring to bring about private confession. I have no patience with it all. These daily services, too, are quite unnecessary, I think. People running off to church, and many, many a time omitting some home duty, calling loudly for their presence at home."

"But the church, dear Hugh, has become, you must allow, *very* lax," faintly remarked Lady Hetherington, "and surely it is our duty to endeavour to bring it back to its former state."

"What it was in our days you mean, I suppose, my dear sister—some twenty years back, or more—

when people attended their village church with profit, on all occasions laid down by the ordinary, were far more charitable than now-a-days about people's actions and ways, and there was more doing, as I said just now, and less talk."

"I suppose, uncle Hugh," interrupted Lady Ethell, with the same irony of tone as before, "when people went to church to say their prayers, and a few charity children drawled over, in their sing-song way, the Morning and Evening Hymns, you had *no soul-inspiriting* music, calling forth devotional feelings?"

"As to people going to church to say their prayers, Ethell, *I* was one who did, I can answer for; but as for music, *I* do not know what you can mean by *soul-inspiriting* music. I am fond of music myself, and remember to have sweet recollection of the simple way the Morning and Evening Hymns were sung by the charity children at Nutleigh, as a boy, taught by Bessy Priestly. You must remember it, too, Horatia, how beautifully she taught them, and played the little organ herself!"

"Yes, she did. How melancholy her death!" vacantly responded Lady Hetherington.

"Why were the daily morning and evening services appointed, Uncle Hugh?'' with no small triumph in her eye at what she thought her uncle's defeat, energetically inquired Lady Ethell.

"Oh! my fair niece, you must catechise others on these points; *I* only speak as I feel. My sister-in-law, Mrs. Vivian, can better answer you on these topics

than myself. Don't you think so, Emmy?" asked Sir Hugh of his daughter.

Emmeline was about to reply, with some hesitation in her manner, when Allyne, with more enthusiasm than was consistent with his usual reserve, anticipated her.

"Yes, papa. Aunt Louisa could answer Ethell on every topic—at least religious, I mean. Why don't you take Ethell and Addy to Summerfield, Emmeline?" he added.

"Ethell is going to ride to-day," replied his sister, "but we can go there to-morrow."

"I should like to see Louisa Vivian's collection of shells," said Lady Adelaide Forster, (who hitherto had been silent), "very much."

"And I, too," rejoined Lady Ethell. "But as to religious topics, Master Allyne," she continued, slightly tossing her little haughty head, and rising from the table as she spoke, "*thank* you, I never allow myself to argue with people on religious subjects."

"Only when, perhaps, the argument turns in your ladyship's favour," provokingly returned her cousin Allyne. "I shall call myself to-day at Summerfield," said Lady Hetherington to her brother; "but it is a very long time since I have seen Louisa—but once, I believe, since poor Arthur's death. She had such very peculiar views upon intercourse with the world, we could not very well agree on some things, I recollect."

"Yes," replied Sir Hugh, "she had some peculiar views on that head, and has them still; but I am not sure that her religious opinions are not very right ones—a little extreme, perhaps. My brother carried things, I used to think, a little too far, poor fellow! but I have seen nothing to condemn in Mrs. Vivian, and a great deal to admire, since she came to reside at that pretty cottage of her's, between this and Paington; but, as I said before, I now repeat, give me practical religion." Here Lady Hetherington made some slight remark upon the appearance of the weather, and inquired of her brother the exact distance Summerfield was from Everton; and the conversation dropped.

"I should very much like to copy that sweet *Vierge à la Chaise*, of Raphael's, that we were looking at yesterday in the North Gallery," said Lady Ethell to her cousin, as they left the breakfast-room together, and were proceeding to Emmeline's pretty boudoir.

"Well," replied Emmeline, "your wish can be readily gratified; I will remove my easel to the window in the gallery, and you shall begin immediately, if you like. They say that it is an original copy, and a very beautiful one. How much I envy you, my dear Ethell, your talent for painting!"

"Oh! my dear Emmy, you much, too much, overrate my attainments; but I must further draw on your good-nature, and crave your loan of Crayons,

and all the necessary *batteries des arts*, for I have not a single thing of the kind with me."

"Most certainly," replied her cousin, "you shall have all your requirements, and I will fetch my work and sit with you, if it will not disturb you."

"Oh, no; on the contrary, it will delight me to have you; and (besides that I always draw better in company), I have a great deal to say to you too."

So saying, the easel was immediately transported to the aforenamed picture gallery, and Lady Ethell was soon commodiously arranged, with all her wants supplied; whilst Emmeline, with her work-basket and embroidery, settled herself in one of the large old-fashioned window-seats close to her cousin, who inquired, "Where is Adelaide?"

"She is with Allyne, in the music-room. He is so passionately fond of music, that he is in the greatest raptures whenever he meets with any one that can play with him, and I have just left him in ecstacy with some new music he has just received."

"Alas! for Allyne, then," rejoined Lady Ethell; "he will be sadly disappointed, I fear; for Adelaide has no ear, and Mademoiselle de la Pierre is *au désespoir* as to her ever making any proficiency; and were it not that mamma persists in her continuing to cultivate music, her piano would long since have given her up; I am glad, however," she continued, "that they are both so well occupied to bar us from interruption, as I am dying to ask you a multitude of

questions; and first and foremost, how is it that Uncle Hugh is so Low Church ?"

"Dear Ethell," replied Emmeline, rather timidly, "I am so little with dear papa; I was not aware that he was what you call Low Church, except that he does not like Mr. Priestly, nor go to Nutleigh, as he used to do. He always does as Aunt Vansittart does."

"And to what church does Lady Vansittart go, when in London?" asked Lady Ethell.

"To St. Michael's," quickly replied Emmeline. "As we now live in Eaton Square, it is the nearest to us, as you know. You do not go to the daily service?" continued her cousin.

"No," said Emmeline, with a shade of excuse in her tone, "there is no church near us for this object, I believe; and besides"—she hesitated.

"Besides," quickly rejoined Lady Ethell, "you mean, I know, that Lady Vansittart would not approve of it; for there is St. Barnabas, to which we go ourselves. Strange it is, very strange," continued Lady Ethell, "that people should be so averse to this old-established rule, and yet belong to the Church of England. But tell me, Emmeline (as the latter did not reply), what sort of person is my Aunt Vivian? I have never seen her since I was a child, but I am told that she has the same religious views as poor Uncle Arthur; and, from what mamma says, I should think he must have been quite a Dissenter."

Emmeline coloured as she replied, "Aunt Louisa is not a Dissenter; she goes to church, Ethell;

but you would not like her. I mean"—and she stopped.

"What do you mean Emmy? Why should not I like her? Allyne seems particularly fond of her; and you, are not *you* fond of her?"

"Ye—s," stammered Emmeline; "Aunt Louisa is very kind to me. She is, moreover, beloved by every one; but, I mean—that you would not agree with her, as she is what you say *papa is*, only still more so; I should say very Low Church."

"Well, we are going with mamma to-morrow, to Summerfield," rejoined Lady Ethell; "but, as she never speaks with any one on religion, there is no fear of my disagreeing with Aunt Vivian. But now tell me, would you like, and would Uncle Hugh have, do you think, any objection to our going together next Sunday, to Nutleigh? I am sure the full service would be enchanting there."

"Papa would not object," thoughtfully replied Emmeline, "and I should like it, but"—

"But what?" asked Lady Ethell.

"Why, I usually go to the school-house in the grounds," said Emmeline, "on Sunday mornings, where my aunt and Louisa teach before Church; perhaps"—and again she hesitated.

"I see, very plainly," said her cousin, "that I have asked something which, after all, you are afraid of doing."

"Afraid! No, Ethell, I am not afraid; but I know that Aunt Louisa would wonder why we

should go to Nutleigh, when Everton is so much nearer."

"And, nevertheless, it is just what I thought, Emmy; you are afraid of what Aunt Vivian would say, or think, instead of deciding for yourself. If you were living with her, and under her immediate control, I could understand your doing as she did, of course; but, situated as you are, in your own father's house, and at liberty to do, consequently, as you like, I cannot see the harm of your going to one church instead of another to please a visitor, as I am at present with you. However, never mind, my dear," she gaily continued, "I will not interfere, my good little cousin, with your wise scruples. Adelaide and I can drive over, if Uncle Hugh will lend us the pony-chaise, and we will get Allyne to accompany us;" and she laughingly added, "*C'est une affaire fini.*"

"No, no, Ethell," returned Emmeline; "I cannot allow you to think me afraid of going to Nutleigh, or of Aunt Louisa, because I am not; and, to prove it to you, I shall come with you on Sunday. When I said that my aunt would wonder *why* we preferred Nutleigh, it was because I know that she disapproves of Mr. Priestly; and if she had ever requested me, or advised me not to go to hear him," she continued, with some honest warmth in her tone, "I should have refused; not from any fear, but that I would not act in decided opposition to her; but, as she has never spoken to me about

it, I may certainly do as I like, without feeling any 'wise scruples,' as you call them."

Lady Ethell was about to reply, to re-assure Emmeline, that in mentioning the words "wise scruples," it was by no means her intention to offend her, when the door opened and Lady Adelaide entered, followed by Allyne.

"What, still drawing, Ethell?" as she approached the easel at which her sister was seated.

"Yes, indeed, I am; and I do not know how I shall bring myself to leave off, even to ride;" and she looked at her little watch as she spoke. "One o'clock! Imagine, my dear Emmeline, who would have supposed that we have been here since eleven o'clock?—two good hours!"

Emmeline raised her eyes from her work; she was evidently thinking much more about what had passed than of Lady Ethell's last words—"two hours!" She quickly, however, recovered herself, and replied,

"But then, Ethell, we have been talking so much, and conversation makes one forget how fast time flies."

"And what have you both been so earnestly engaged in conversation about?" inquired Lady Adelaide, "that two hours should pass away so swiftly, if I may be permitted to ask?"

"Oh, about Church nonsense and Mr. Priestly, I bet you any thing you like," said Allyne. "Emmeline, I take it, has been making confessions to Ethell, and Ethell has been telling her how she

would like to know Eustace Priestly. He would just suit you, I do assure you, Ethell; and he is not married," continued Allyne.

"Oh, Allyne! Allyne! you are too provoking. The idea of wishing to know a person one has never seen!" returned his sister, "that is truly amusing!"

"But we *did* see Mr. Priestly, certainly, this morning," acknowledged Lady Adelaide, "and we both thought he looked very excellent, and—"

"You see, I said so!" laughingly exclaimed Allyne.

"But that does not prove, Master Allyne, that we were talking of him when you came in just now," said Lady Ethell, with a provoking smile; "nor does it follow, because we think a person excellent, that we wish exactly to know them. I never expressed such a wish," she added, blushing as she spoke.

"Blushes are sometimes 'tell-tales' of our thoughts, nevertheless," returned Allyne, laughing intensely.

"Can you not, Addy, come and read to us a little, and deliver us from all Allyne's nonsense?" said Lady Ethell to her sister. "Would it not be a good thing, Emmeline?"

"Yes, indeed. What shall we read?" inquired her cousin.

"I will read," replied Emmeline, "whilst Adelaide finishes her beautiful crochet collar, about which she is, I know, most anxious. Shall we have

Miss Strickland's *Lives of the Queens of England?*"

"By all means," said both sisters; "we were so much pleased with Beatrice of Modena, James the Second's consort. Mary and Eveline were reading it in the school-room lately, and we heard bits and scraps of it only at different times."

"Well, I have only just began it," replied Emmeline, "so that is very fortunate; I will fetch it from papa's library."

"*My* presence is, of course, to be dispensed with?" said Allyne.

"Unless, dear Allyne, *you* would read to us," said Emmeline, in a soft, persuasive tone.

"And promise not to tease us," said Lady Ethell; "I will have my revenge to-night, I promise you, if you do. And, when you want a song, I will not sing," she added, with her *petite air malicieuse.*

"Well, I will not persecute you any more, for I could not do without my songs for all the Eustace Priestlys in the world; and I will still further oblige you by reading to you, for it is much too warm to go out. So, then, where is the book?"

"I will go and get it for you, dear Allyne," said his sister. And she rose to fetch it; but her brother was gone ere she could reach the door, whistling, as he went, his cousin's last German song, of which he was so fond—*Fröhlich und Wohlgemuth.*

"I wish Forster was half so good-natured as Allyne," said Lady Adelaide, alluding to her only brother, Lord Forster, who had just entered the

Guards; "he never spares us one half-hour of his time, much less read to us."

Allyne now returned, with the book in hand, fully justifying his cousin's opinion that he was the most *good-natured boy in the world,* by reading to them till luncheon was ready, when the merry group dispersed to join their mother and uncle in the dining-room.

CHAPTER IX.

"There is a reaper whose name is Death,
And with his sickle keen
He reaps the bearded grain at a breath,
And the flowers that grow between."

LADY HETHERINGTON had changed her intention of going, as she had proposed, that day to Summerfield, declaring that it was too warm to do anything. She would go to-morrow, and take her daughters with her; it was quite right that they should see their aunt and cousins. But the truth was, this visit was distasteful to her; and as she reclined some two hours later on the sofa, in her beautiful dressing-room at Everton, with its open window, commanding one of the most splendid views of the surrounding country, Lady Hetherington could not but admit to herself that her brother's wife had never been congenial to her; the religious views she entertained, or, in other words, her piety, being the real cause. Lady Hetherington had married before her brother Arthur, several years. In her girlish days Horatia Vivian had been his darling sister; and during his college vacations, when studying at Cambridge, they were inseparable. Whilst studying, he steadily bore in view that his first great object was

to fit himself for that service to which he purposed to devote the energies of his life; and gay and volatile as was his sister, her attachment to him led him sometimes to hope that his own serious views had made some real impression upon her, from the very deep attention with which she would apparently listen to his gentle admonitions from time to time against her giving her whole affections to the dazzling vanities of the world. But in this hope he was painfully disappointed. Horatia Vivian married, and became the wife of a man with whom religion was only a profession, and a complete worldly man in all his tastes and habits. Painfully did her brother, Arthur Vivian, five years later elucidate this distressing truth, when, at the pressing invitation of the Earl and Countess of Hetherington, he took his wife to Alton Towers, the magnificent seat of his brother-in-law, Horatia's husband; and there, during a short visit he paid them (his duties as a clergyman not admitting of a longer absence from his parish), he saw those early hopes he had cherished of his sister's serious impressions had been wholly deceptive. The Countess of Hetherington's position, and great fortune, had, since her marriage, only drawn her more readily into the vortex of her own natural inclinations. It was not, therefore, to be expected that her brother's wife should be particularly agreeable to her, or that there could be the smallest approach to anything of sisterly feeling between them. How could there be? for they had

not one thought in common; and though Lady Hetherington acted most admirably her part as her hostess, and contrived most cleverly to conceal her dislike of the choice her brother had made, when their visit was over, they parted almost the same strangers they were on meeting.

Mr. Vivian's rectory was situated in Cumberland, and Alton Towers, Lord Hetherington's property, in Staffordshire; they, consequently, very rarely, if ever, met.

The Hetheringtons were perpetually in London, seldom in the country; and though the invitations were at *first* many from Lady Hetherington to her brother and his wife, they were *very* rarely accepted by them. Very few, consequently, had been her Ladyship's opportunities for knowing Mrs. Arthur Vivian any better; she had seen her but once since Mr. Vivian's death, and now Lady Hetherington no longer disguised from herself that any *rapprochement* under such altered circumstances, with a person whose high religious profession had formerly made so disagreeable an impression upon her, would by no means be agreeable to her. These, therefore, were the real motives which made her ladyship defer her visit to Summerfield.

But we must now turn to other scenes, and take a glance at the school-room at Paington Abbey, where considerable excitement prevailed, from news having been duly conveyed to them by the same Mrs. Graham (who on former occasions had been similarly

employed), that the family were to prepare, without delay, for going to the Isle of Wight; and the Undercliff was selected, for its sheltered situation and very mild climate, for Lady Fitzwilliam, whose state of health caused Sir James considerable uneasiness, and for whom her medical advisers had prescribed immediate change.

No sooner had the stately Mrs. Graham left the school-room, having delivered her orders, which she had that very day received from her master by post, than Marion joyfully exclaimed, "Oh, Anne, how very, very pleasant this news is for us! what a delightful change it will be for us all! Dear Miss Sinclair, are you not pleased?"

Anne was at this moment busily engaged at her globes, and did not immediately reply. Miss Sinclair was hearing little Edith her French lessons, which were just finished, and waited till she could dismiss her, to put by her books, to answer her enthusiastic pupil, Marion's, joyful exclamation.

"Yes, my dear," at length she replied, "I am glad for you all, and particularly on your mamma's account, as I think change of air will probably be very beneficial to her. For myself I care very little."

"Well, as for me," said Anne, "I am very sorry to leave home; I love Paington Abbey better than any other place in the world, and would never wish to leave it. Don't you remember, Marian, how much we wished ourselves at home again when we

were in London this spring? Grosvenor Square was so dull, and we never walked in the streets."

"Yes," returned Marion, "London is a horrid place; but going to the sea-side is quite a different thing; Graham says so; and I do love the sea."

"And," rejoined Miss Sinclair, "the Isle of Wight is a most interesting place. Ventnor, should you go there, is particularly pleasant. There is a charming beach, where you find really valuable pebbles, and the prettiest sea-weeds. Of these some persons make very beautiful collections; and there are very fine crystals, called Isle of Wight diamonds. Then, the country is lovely! so I expect you will very much enjoy your visit there."

"May I go and tell nurse that we are going away?" inquired little Edith.

"Not until my little girl has finished her work, and learned all her lessons for to-morrow. I am now ready for your *Histoire Universelle*, Anne," continued Miss Sinclair; "after which we will go out. To-morrow I propose visiting Mrs. Vivian, to tell her of our projected absence. The last day we must devote to packing up. Marion, take your work, my love, and sit with Edith in that window whilst we are reading."

Alas for Marion! her head was running entirely on the journey before her; and little Edith, in far too great a fidget to go and tell Budd all about it, to do, either of them, the task allotted as it should be done; so that when Miss Sinclair and Anne had

completed the hour's reading, Marion and Edith had the mortification of hearing that they must remain at home; the one to complete the task hardly begun, the other to undo what was done already so badly.

"My dear children, I am sorry to leave you at home, *both* of you," said Miss Sinclair; "but it is all your own faults. You, Marion, I have constantly warned against the habit of wasting the time assigned you for your work; and Edith has been evidently thinking of something else, and taken no pains with hers, so that now you must abide the consequences."

So saying, Miss Sinclair left the school-room, followed by Anne. Edith's tears flowed fast over her work, as she began the tiresome unpicking; and Marion's countenance was likewise, for a few moments, overclouded; but her natural buoyancy of spirits returned at the sight of her young cousin's distress.

"Well, Edith," said she, "it is very true I have set you a very foolish example; and if I had only been more industrious, you would have been so too; but don't cry about it, that will do no good now, you will soon do it again; come, let us both set to work busily."

Thus, with many such encouraging words, Marion soothed little Edith; and at length the work *was* done; and Edith's arms, with grateful affection, were entwined around her cousin's neck, saying,

"Oh, dear, dear cousin Marion, you are always so kind!"

In the meanwhile, Miss Sinclair and Anne proceeded on their walk. They had taken with them some few articles of clothing, promised to one or more of the poor they were accustomed to visit; and, having made their distributions, were returning home, when it occurred to Miss Sinclair that, being so near to Nutleigh, they might as well call to inquire for old Margaret Lindsay; observing to Anne, "I have seen nothing of Mabel for a long time; and, when I last saw her poor mother, she gave me but a sad history of her daughter. If I remember right, she was then wishing to get her away from this part of the world, into service; and, as we are leaving home so immediately, I should like to hear something of her, and know how things have been settled."

It was now August, and the weather intensely hot. They had walked unusually fast, and Miss Sinclair proposed to Anne, seeing that she was tired, to rest on a stile before they proceeded further; to which proposition her pupil very readily assented.

"How calm and peaceful Nutleigh looks from this! There is the Priory, and the little church; Summerfield, too, and even Everton, with its beautiful woods in the distance," observed Anne, as she seated herself by her governess.

"We have, indeed, a lovely view before us," returned Miss Sinclair. Nature is clad in her brightest, to-day; but what a melancholy reflection it is to a thinking mind, that so fair a world as this is should

yet, in everything, bear the marks of the primeval curse! No loveliness that is of anv duration; no certainty, no lasting happiness, however highly coloured to our present view; but there is a rest, Anne, you know, a glorious rest; and shadows are permitted to fall heavily and darkly on all our brightest hopes here, and tarnish all our best treasures, to open our eyes, and cause our hearts to long for that rest." And a sigh escaped Miss Sinclair as she spoke, for those shadows had been permitted to fall heavily (as our readers may remember) on *her* fortunes.

"And Edward, dear Miss Sinclair, dear Edward—do you think he has entered into that rest?" timidly inquired Anne. "I have frequently wished to ask you this question; for I often, very often, think of him;" and a tear silently stole down her cheeks as she spoke.

"We must hope so; his removal was so very sudden, my dearest Anne, that we could have no outward evidence of the state of his young mind. The compassion and tender mercies of the Lord, we know, are very great; at the same time, we are only told in the Word of Truth, that *those who die in the faith of our Lord* shall enter into the heavenly rest. Poor Edward's early death is a call to *you*, young as you are, dear girl, to seek the Lord early. You remember the sweet promise to those who do so, do you not?"

"Yes; it was one of the texts marked down in the Bible poor dear Aunt Edith gave me last year

when she was with us, and I have always loved it for her sake."

"If you are now sufficiently rested we will continue our walk," said Miss Sinclair, "as I do not wish to return home late."

So saying, they slowly descended the winding hill, which brought them to the little village of Nutleigh. It was a remarkably pretty one; all its cottages had, more or less, neat, small gardens, each vying with the other in variety of beautiful flowers and arrangement. Who that has traveled much in France or Germany, will not, with a feeling of national pride, draw the decisive comparison in our own favour?—the simple neatness, cleanliness, and comfort of the humble English cottage, with the disorderly and unsightly habitations of the villages on the Continent, through which one passes, take which and what route you may.

Margaret Lindsay's cottage, to which I am now conducting my readers, was one of the very prettiest at Nutleigh; and Mabel, her daughter, was reckoned also the *belle* of the village. As Miss Sinclair and her pupil approached, the garden gate was slightly a-jar, and, amidst a profusion of roses, stocks, and mignionette, there grew one beautiful moss-rose, old Margaret's favourite nursling, and also a bed of lavender in full blossom. They paused a moment to enjoy the delicious fragrance of these mingled sweets, when they heard distinctly the sound as of people talking, and waited to catch the voice

of the speaker; but there was again a silence. Miss Sinclair gently raised the latch of the door—no one was there. The room was scrupulously neat; and it was evident the voices they had heard proceeded from the room above. Miss Sinclair ascended the little narrow stairs, motioning gently to Anne to wait her return below, wishing first to ascertain whether it was illness that detained the inhabitants of the little cottage upstairs. She was about to pronounce old Margaret's name, and call to her, when the voice already mentioned to have been heard on approaching the cottage, resumed again. Raising herself one step higher (whilst she concealed herself completely from view), she was very speedily initiated into the state of the case. The door was, on account of the heat of the weather, quite wide open; old Margaret was rocking herself uneasily in a chair by the side of the chimney-piece, every now and then casting an anxious glance at the bed, on which lay extended her daughter Mabel, whose cheeks, and whole appearance, indicated the presence of high fever. With his back to the door stood a gentleman, whose face Miss Sinclair could not see; there were two or more people, she thought she perceived, in the room, but it was impossible to distinguish from the place where she stood. To this gentleman poor Mabel was, beyond any doubt, addressing herself; her manner was excited, and she spoke with much rapidity.

"Yes, Sir, I sent for you—I entreated mother to

send for *you;* I feel myself dying, Sir; I know I have but few days, perhaps hours, to live, and I wished to tell *you the truth;* and, perhaps, even from such as me, it will do you good. Oh, Sir, it is a fearful thing!"—and her whole frame shuddered as she spoke (whilst she seemed endeavouring to penetrate, if possible, the very soul of the person she addressed)—"Oh, it is an awful thing to come to this hour, and to feel one has nothing to lay hold of! You have preached to *me* and to others, as I have sat Sunday after Sunday to listen to you, but you never told me to search my evil heart—to read my Bible, my long-neglected Bible. You never told me to look *only* to Christ, and I should be saved. I have heard you speak, Sir. Oh, Mr. Priestly"—for it was no other than himself—"I have heard you talk of the Church, and how the Church had become neglected in these days, and how every good Churchman should endeavour to build up her glory; and I have felt proud in being better learned than others, and I have been pleased to *do* something (though I *knew better*); I learned better in old Mr. Priestly's time, in your father's school at Repton. The Church, Sir, will not save me now. If I had only thought less of my works, and more of a Saviour! But now—I can't! ... There's my Bible, but every word in it condemns me.... I can't pray now—I have neglected my Saviour, and He will not hear me now—Where shall I go? for I am dying!—I am dying! I see it all now when it is

too late!"—and the despair with which this was said was touching in the extreme. "*Your* preaching, Mr. Priestly, will not lead a soul to heaven."

Here the young clergyman advanced towards the poor dying girl, and endeavoured to speak; but Mabel motioned him back with almost delirious agony, saying, "No, no, you cannot tell me of hope or of safety; forms can do me no good now; I cannot listen now.... Think of the souls you preach to on Sundays; go and tell them of a Saviour. I have told you all I wanted to say; no one can do me any good now;"... and she waved her hand impatiently, turning, restlessly, in her bed.

Her mind continuing to wander deliriously every now and then, and seeing that his services were not required, Mr. Priestly prepared to take his leave, *much* shocked at the scene he had just witnessed.

Approaching old Margaret Lindsay (whose agony of grief deprived her of all power of utterance, whilst floods of tears rolled silently down her furrowed cheeks), he expressed his distress for her daughter.

"I am," he said, "very, very sorry for your child, Mrs. Lindsay; her mind is evidently much disturbed, and she wanders much. I will not, therefore, stay longer now; but if she should ask for me again, you know I shall always be ready to come to her."

And so saying, Eustace Priestly left the cottage so much absorbed with the painful scene which had taken place, that he actually passed Miss Sinclair

(who made way for him on the dark and very narrow stairs, and Anne Fitzwilliam afterwards, who was during this time awaiting her governess in the room beneath), without seeing either of them.

As he hurriedly left the garden, Miss Sinclair lost no time in apprizing the inmates of her presence. She managed to beckon old Margaret, who had continued with her face entirely covered by her apron, rocking herself to and fro in the same old chair; when, hearing her name called, she instantly roused herself, and seeing Miss Sinclair, she hastily descended with the latter, who expressed herself deeply concerned for the state of Mabel's mind.

"Ah, ma'am,"—and a fresh burst of tears again relieved the poor old creature as she spoke—"if it was only her body—if it was but that! I know I must lose her in this world. Oh, it does seem hard to part with my child—very hard; but still, I could say, 'The Lord's will be done!' But, oh! to lose her in this state, with no hope before her, and *I* no hope to look to of seeing her again—it is dreadful! Oh! I can't bear to think on't. I always said it, Mr. Priestly's preaching was dead work; but my poor Mabel's head was turned with all the *new* fashions he introduced into Nutleigh Church; she would go *no*where else this long while. I said it—I said it—that when she left off reading her Bible, and held so much to fasts and *festivals*, all was not right. Should Mabel die in this state, oh, what

shall I do?" And again the poor creature wept aloud.

"Whilst there is life there is hope, my good Margaret. We will pray for her to Him who, we know, whilst He loves to be worshiped in the congregation, to be honoured in His own house *before* men, yet listens with tenderest compassion to the cry of each sufferer; and the heart distressed, in the stillness of the lonely chamber—the heart uplifted to our Heavenly Father in the time of our greatest need—will bring down comfort to us, if not help. I shall let your good friend, Mrs. Vivian, know of poor Mabel's danger; she will, I am sure, speedily come to you."

"Oh, ma'am," replied the poor old woman, "I have sent to tell that dear lady, and she'll come I know, for she has been always so kind to me and mine. And James—I expect him every minute to see his sister."

Miss Sinclair pondered very sadly as she walked home, and the conversation was naturally, with her pupil, wholly upon the sorrowful scene she had just left. On reaching Paington Abbey, she immediately wrote a note to Mrs. Vivian, acquainting her with her affecting visit; and it was with great satisfaction to herself that she looked forward to the morrow, having previously arranged (as we have before observed) to make their farewell visit to their friends at Summerfield, where her anxiety for further news of Mabel would be relieved the next day.

CHAPTER X.

"Yet stars for thee are bright
In midnight skies,
And tranquil worlds of light
Around thee rise."

FOSBERRY.

THE weather was too inviting to remain in the house; and Louisa Vivian, having completed the studies left her by her mother, who had (upon the receipt of Miss Sinclair's note) gone in haste and very early the following morning to poor Margaret Lindsay's cottage, took her work, and repaired to her favourite little bower, in the shadiest part of the prettily laid-out grounds of Summerfield, to watch for Mrs. Vivian's return.

Her beautiful dog, Di, as she called her playful little favourite—was at her feet, looking very wistfully in her face.

"You want a game of play, Mr. Di, I see," said Louisa; "but indeed, indeed, Di, it is *too* warm; I cannot run about with you this morning; besides, you see, I want to finish my crochet-collar; so, now, you must let me be quiet."

The dog, with all the intelligence of his breed—a beautiful King Charles's spaniel—seemed to under-

stand his young mistress, and after a little restlessness and sundry turns round, betook himself to a quiet nap at her feet; but neither he nor Louisa were destined to remain long undisturbed.

Hardly a quarter of an hour had elapsed, before a low growl from Di, succeeded by a joyous bark, announced the approach of friends; and looking up from the work in which she was so busily engaged, she perceived her mother, accompanied by Miss Sinclair, the Fitzwilliams, and little Edith Trevor. They had met Mrs. Vivian, and accompanied her on their mutual road to Summerfield.

Di bounded to meet the young people, with whom he was a very great favourite. Louisa followed. But her pleasure at seeing her friends was much clouded by the sorrowful announcement of Mabel's death.

Mrs. Vivian had already related to Miss Sinclair, on their way, several little details of her visit to the cottage, and now continued: "Yes, poor Mabel expired before I left the house, and without giving any sign of comfortable assurance in her Saviour's merits She had been raving all night, and was delirious when I went in. All that *I* could do was to kneel down and commit her in prayer to Him whose name is 'Love,' and whose compassions never fail. It might have been fancy, but I thought she knew me once during my prayer, for she fixed her eyes attentively on me, but it was impossible to distinguish to any certainty. A faint consciousness returned just at the

last, when she uttered the words, 'Mother, mother!' and was gone! I had not the smallest idea, when at Nutleigh last week, how very soon poor Mabel's life was to terminate; for, though suffering at the time with a slight feverish attack, she was in no danger. As the conversation I then had with the poor girl, in spite of her peculiar reserve of manner, seemed to impress her, I had promised to return in a day or two. You may judge, then, how shocked I felt on receiving your note last evening, and with what speed I hastened to poor Margaret, in her affliction, this morning."

"Ah, poor girl, poor Mabel!" exclaimed the younger members of the party.

"Her sudden death, as we may call it," resumed Mrs. Vivian, "is indeed a lesson to us all to prepare, in life, for death. When I say prepare, I mean, make the *right* preparation—the due examination of our hearts in secret before the Lord, not blinding ourselves with any garment of self-righteousness. *Forms* are good, when the spirit accompanies the act; and what more pleasing to the Lord than waiting upon Him in the congregation of His saints? But to *trust* in *any* of these—to imagine, for a moment, that *any act* of ours, *anything we do*, can render us acceptable to Him who has given us but *one* way of access to Him, even by Jesus, and *Him alone*—how mistaken!"

Mabel was a strict attendant at Nutleigh Church; but, alas! she had not, it appears, found her Saviour.

Dinner was now announced; and Mrs. Vivian requested Miss Sinclair would remain with her pupils, and pass the rest of the day with them. They had but just finished, and re-entered the drawing-room, when a loud ring of the bell announced visitors; and, in a few moments, Lady Hetherington, followed by her daughters, Lady Ethell, and Adelaide Forster, with her niece, Emmeline Vivian, entered the room.

"The weather has been so exceedingly oppressive I have been unable, hitherto, to find my way to your really charming little retreat," said her ladyship, advancing to meet Mrs. Vivian; "we are only staying a few days at Everton."

"I should be afraid to say how long it is, my dear Lady Hetherington, since we have met. These remind us, however, how swiftly time flies;" and she pointed to both her nieces, Lady Ethell and Adelaide. "These are your daughters, I presume, of whom I have heard so much from Emmeline;" and she made them welcome in her usual easy and unaffected manner.

"And your children," inquired Lady Hetherington (as she seated herself on a low *bergère*, near a window opening on a delicious bed of geraniums, interspersed with heliotrope, whose delicate fragrance was full of attraction), "where are they?"

Louisa, on the first announcement of visitors, had shrunk back with her friends, the Fitzwilliams, into one of the windows at the farthest end of

the room, from which her cousin Emmeline was endeavouring to withdraw her, when her mother's voice, calling for her, obliged her at once to come forward.

"A living miniature, indeed, of my poor brother!" said Lady Hetherington, as Mrs. Vivian presented the little girl to her aunt.

"And my *only* girl," said Mrs. Vivian.

"I should think Eveline is about your age," said her aunt to her young niece, who stood longing for permission to retire from her scrutinizing look. "Eveline is twelve, is she not?" inquired her ladyship of her youngest daughter, who, with her sister was engaged in looking at one or two very pretty landscapes, in oils, which adorned Mrs. Vivian's little *salon*.

"You are thinking of Mary, mamma. Eveline is almost fourteen," replied Lady Adelaide.

"So she is, so she is. Well, I never can remember my children's ages," returned her mother.

"Your cousins may, perhaps, like to see our little conservatory, such as it is, and Arthur's aviary, my dear Louisa," said Mrs. Vivian.

Too glad to escape, Louisa immediately followed her mother's directions, and advanced to Lady Adelaide, whose kind encouraging face seemed to promise easy access.

"We shall like it very much indeed; but first, do you know, Emmeline has made us long to see your collection of sea-weeds and shells! You

would confer on us great pleasure in showing them to us."

With much alacrity Louisa complied, and, assisted by Emmeline, conveyed a large portfolio to where her young friends, the Fitzwilliams, were sitting. Anne and Marion now joined them, with little Edith, and Lady Ethell and Adelaide followed.

"Who is that little beauty?" inquired Lady Hetherington of Mrs. Vivian, as she raised her glass to her eye at the distance, to distinguish who the young people were, amongst whom her daughters were standing; and the strikingly lovely infantine features of Edith, as she raised her face to take her share in admiring Louisa's sea-weeds, presented itself to her view.

"That is Edith Trevor," returned Mrs. Vivian; "she *is* a very lovely child, the only daughter of Lord Grey. She is, with her young cousins, Sir James Fitzwilliam's little girls, and their governess, Miss Sinclair, passing the day with Louisa."

"Fitzwilliams! oh, poor Lady Fitzwilliam! That was a dreadful affair, her son's early and melancholy death. What a sweet spot this is!" and Lady Hetherington glanced her eye over the lawn, so gracefully arranged in divers-shaped flower-beds.

"I am glad you like it. Louisa is my chief gardener, and our little *parterre* displays some good taste, I allow."

"And have you no governess?" inquired Lady Hetherington, listlessly.

"Oh, I could never afford the high salary required; and as my dear girl will not want any extraordinary accomplishments for the sphere most probably allotted for her (a *very* modest one), I undertake that province myself. She has a pretty voice, and plays nicely on the piano; but her brothers draw so largely on my small means, and stand in so much more need of help, Louisa can have no other advantages than what I can give her. Sandhurst is a most expensive school, where her brother is educating for the army; and my youngest boy is at a very good school, not far distant."

"You must let Hugh come and see us in the holidays; we shall be in London, and Lord Hetherington will be very glad to see him," replied her ladyship.

During this time the young people had become speedily acquainted. Even Lady Ethell (who, though just seventeen, considered herself, without having yet made her *début* in the *grand monde*, quite above the innocent ages of twelve and thirteen), condescended to be pleased with the very beautiful collection of marine plants. Marion Fitzwilliam, with her animation and vivacity (though only eleven), fully justified her friend Louisa's previous assurance, that Emmeline had not certainly known her, or she never could have thought her stiff, now became quickly friends; and Louisa, who had felt attracted at the first to Lady Adelaide, from her kind, good-natured face, on better acquaintance,

found her just what she had thought her, and they chatted away as if they had been friends for years. Anne's timidity was *her* great drawback; and she was the only one who, with Edith, preferred a seat near Miss Sinclair. Much as the latter deplored her pupil's reserve, which so often excluded her, as it were, from participating in the recreations of other young people, she well understood the excessive timidity from which it proceeded; and Anne ever found an affectionate refuge in her.

Lady Ethell, in a very short time, perceived Miss Sinclair to be no common governess; and her extremely lady-like deportment, as well as highly-intellectual conversation, inspired her with so much respect for her, that, whilst the others enjoyed themselves with their delightful occupations, she found the time pass most pleasantly in conversation with her.

But now a loud exclamation from the merry party made them aware that there was some addition to their numbers; and the intruders soon proved to be no others than Sir Hugh Vivian and Allyne.

"I was sure of finding you all here," said Sir Hugh, as he entered.

He was unprepared, however, for so *many* young faces, and, for one moment, stood surveying the pretty groupe. Allyne left his father to join them, and was asking his cousin Louisa how soon her brother's holidays began, when little Edith, to whom Louisa had given a scrap-book, to amuse

her, as soon as she was tired of the sea-weeds, in looking up at the new-comers, contrived to let the heavy book (for it was a very large one) slide from the chair, and in so doing a large leaf was torn out.

"Oh, Marion! dear Marion!" cried Edith, what shall I do? See, see, what I have done!"

Her consternation and distress attracted the universal attention of all her young friends; but Allyne, who was remarkably good-natured, was the first to come to her relief, even before Marion, who, with her new acquaintance, Emmeline, lost no time in flying to her aid.

"No very great damage done," said Allyne, as he lifted the heavy book from the floor, and with a kind smile replaced it on the chair, "eh, Louisa?" and he appealed to his cousin to re-assure little Edith and Miss Sinclair, who had immediately left her place the moment of the unlucky accident, to inquire into it.

"I am so *very* sorry," said the little girl, with a charming *naiveté* and grace, for which she was quite peculiar, "I am *so* sorry!"

"Oh! never mind, never mind, dear," said Louisa, it might have happened to me in the same way; think no more about it."

"I will turn over the leaves for you," said Allyne; "you must not give up looking at all the pretty prints because of this little accident. Misfortunes will happen with the best care. Come, let us see

what is to be seen;" and he placed the album on the table.

Edith made no objection to his kind proposal. Marion preferred returning to her agreeable occupation; but Anne, encouraged by the advances Emmeline had made her younger sister, now ventured to take her place, and they stood together, looking at the beautiful prints which Allyne displayed one after another, for little Edith's amusement. The parties were, however, prepared to separate, as Lady Hetherington motioned to take her leave, and Lady Ethell and Adelaide rose to accompany their mother, both reluctantly, as they acknowledged. Mrs. Vivian came forward with her usual sweetness of manner, and expressed her regret that, during this short visit, she had seen nothing of her *hitherto stranger* nieces.

"You will dine with us on Saturday?" said Sir Hugh to his sister-in-law, as he opened the door for Lady Hetherington and her daughters. "Horatia leaves us on Monday."

"I will not refuse your kind invitation, my dear Hugh," replied Mrs. Vivian.

"I have asked Mr. Graham and young Priestly," continued Sir Hugh; I met them both on my way here; and without you to help me out, *the Church* will be too strong for me." And he laughed as he spoke.

"*Mr. Priestly!* Emmy, did you hear Uncle Hugh say *that he* had asked *Mr. Priestly* to dinner?"

said Lady Ethell in a low voice to her cousin, as she followed her mother into the carriage.

Emmeline smilingly nodded assent; keeping, however, further observation on the subject till they should find themselves alone.

"It must be very fatiguing, I should think, *teaching*," said Lady Hetherington, when they had proceeded some little way; "I wonder how your aunt, Emmeline, can possibly undergo such a task."

"Indeed, I assure you," returned her niece, "my aunt thinks *it no task* teaching Louisa;" and Emmeline quite smiled at the idea.

"How beautifully Aunt Vivian paints!" observed Lady Adelaide.

"Were those her paintings you were looking at?" languidly inquired her mother?

"Louisa told me they were her mother's doing. I have never yet seen any more beautiful; have *you*, Ethell?" addressing her sister.

But Ethell had heard nothing of what was passing; she was plunged in deep reverie when her sister spoke, and it was only when the latter repeated her question that she collected her thoughts mechanically to reply, "Beautiful, beautiful indeed!"

"Who is that?" inquired her aunt, as a gentleman bowed to Emmeline as the carriage passed.

"Mr. Graham, our new clergyman at Everton," said Emmeline; "he has been here now about six months; he was poor Uncle Arthur's curate for some

time before his death, and when the living of Everton became vacant, papa presented it to him. He dines with us on Saturday ; he must surely be going now to Summerfield."

She was right—Mr. Graham *was* on his way there.

CHAPTER XI.

"He comes the broken hearts to bind,
The bleeding souls to cure,
And with the treasures of His grace
T' enrich the humble poor."

ANONYMOUS.

"INDEED, Sir, I did not know there was any difference in church or chapel schools. Little Bessie and Amy have always attended the church school at Nutleigh, and when I left the church I didn't see any reason to remove them. They teaches them their Bible up there, and I thought that was all right enough; but they can go to yours, Sir, if you thinks fit."

These words were uttered by a poor woman who kept a small shop in the village of Nutleigh, and were addressed to Mr. Faithful, the Independent minister of that place, who had called upon her to inquire why, as a member now of his congregation, she still continued to send her children to the church-school.

"Yes, Mrs. Goodman," replied Mr. Faithful, "they teach them the Bible, as you say, yonder; but they mix up a good deal they need not, with it. Our children have nothing to do with church catechisms, etcetera, and all that. The sooner we have

them free of all bondage the better, excepting the yoke of Christ."

"Well, Sir, if you please, I will withdraw them. As I said before, it is not long, you know, since I have joined membership with your chapel, so you must please to excuse my knowing no better, Sir. I am a deal upset, too," she continued; "I have not long come in from my good neighbour, Margaret Lindsay; I was with her all night; and she's just lost her only daughter, Mabel, as pretty a girl as ever you'd see, Sir, but perhaps you's seen her afore. Well, Sir, she's dead. She *died this* morning; ah, Sir, without any hopes, without any peace, any joy! She was one of Mr. Priestly's congregation. Much good his preaching did her!—much good all her church-going did her! Oh, it would melt your heart, Sir, to see her poor old mother; she's heartbroken, and no one to go in and say a word of comfort to her. Poor soul! I was a going to take the liberty, Sir, of saying if *you* would just call in. Oh, Sir, it would be a comfort. Mrs. Lindsay loves her Bible; ah, that she does! but it is not Mr. Priestly's visits as will comfort *her*."

Mr. Faithful readily consented to make Margaret a call, and expressed himself very sorry to hear of her affliction, adding, "that's where it is, you see; the Church Establishment ordains those who are ill fitted for their charges, besides laying its members under bondage, not according to Scripture." And so saying, he took his leave.

He found Mrs. Lindsay's cottage easily enough. As we have before mentioned, it was one of the prettiest in the village of Nutleigh; and although old Margaret was in the deepest affliction, she rose from the arm-chair in which she had been rocking herself in her anguish, and requested Mr. Faithful to be seated.

"Your neighbour, Mrs. Goodman, has just acquainted me," he began, "with the sore affliction the Lord has been pleased to lay upon you—a very heavy one—and I feel very much for you, Mrs. Lindsay; but you know, I hope that *He* who has seen fit to smite you so grievously, is mighty to heal and bind up your wound." And he took the chair offered to him, as he spoke. "You know the widow's friend, our merciful and compassionate High Priest?"

"Ah, Sir, I do know *Him*." And the heavy tears rolled down her cheek as she spoke. "If the Lord, my Saviour, had not taught me to know Him, and to love Him too, what should I do now? He took my *all* when He saw fit to call my child. Would that I had been the first to go! If she could but have told me that she died in peace, Sir, it would have softened the blow, and I could have better said, 'The Lord's will be done!'"

"We must believe where we do not see, sometimes; and perhaps, Mrs. Lindsay, your poor daughter's removal was to be a call to others. She was a member of the Church Establishment—was she not?"

"Yes, Sir, and so am I, and a very attached member of the Church of England; but it is no Church of England, or any other Church, that'll save us, out of Christ; and we are apt, Sir, to make any congregation to which we belong the one that's to save us—that's where it is—and to make a deal too much of the creature and ourselves, and so take the glory away from Christ. Now we have God's Word, Sir, with the teaching of His Holy Spirit, to keep us humble; and I feels it is no matter to which form of worship we belongs, so as we worships in spirit and in truth; but I prefers the Church of England, because I was bred up in the Church; I first learnt to know my Saviour *in* the Church of England, and I have never seen any reason to leave her. I am of those, in my humble way, Sir, that am grieved to think of *them* who bring shame and dishonour on our good Church, by bringing in new customs and new ways, puffed up with their own selves, losing sight of their Master's glory. It is that that led my poor, poor girl, wrong—that's what it was; but it is no reason for going away from the Church because *one* is imperfect. We shall find imperfection everywhere, Sir; only in Christ all is perfect—in nothing else—and humility is, I think, a first grace."

"You, Mrs. Lindsay, have certainly learnt the truth," said Mr. Faithful, much struck with the gospel simplicity of all she said; "and it is a great mercy, in the moment of such deep affliction, to know where to look out for support. As you say,

all is perfect in Christ. If in Him, we are indeed safe; out of Him, all is lost."

A gentle knock at the door here announced another visitor, and before old Margaret could rise to see who it was, Mr. Priestly introduced himself.

"Well, Mrs. Lindsay," he began, "I have but just heard of your poor daughter's removal, and I lost no time in making you a call. You know I told you to send for me if you wanted me;" and as he spoke his eye glanced uneasily on Mr. Faithful, who he immediately recognized to be no other than the dissenting minister of Nutleigh.

"I require no interference in my parish," he began, "being ever ready to attend the call of any of my parishioners who wish to see me, as well as being fully equal to the need of those entrusted to my charge."

Mr. Faithful, at so unceremonious a greeting, here rose, and kindly shaking old Margaret by the hand, with a slight bow—unreturned, however, by Mr. Priestly—took his leave.

"Your daughter," began the latter, as he took the vacant seat, "it must be a comfort to you to remember, was a regular attendant at church, and died in the true faith of our holy Church. It is not by those delirious ravings, the effects only of the progress of disease, when I saw her last, that we are to judge of a person's state when they die; it is their life—their previous life; and your daughter's was a bright example," continued Mr. Priestly.

"Oh, Sir, it breaks my heart to hear you speak thus; it does, it does!" and she burst into tears afresh. "I could willingly have died myself in place of her, my poor child, to have known that she died in peace and assurance; but, oh, Sir, it has been the Lord's will, and His will be done. But you cannot deceive me, Sir; my poor girl, Mabel, had been troubled in her mind some little while; she had been trusting in the forms, Sir; she had been trusting too long for her salvation in that very attendance upon her church, Sir, as you says *was so right;* she had left off *trusting all to Jesus,* and her soul *was tossed* about, when she most needed assurance. Oh, yes, yes! We know not, it is *true,* what passed between Christ and her soul at the last; *this* is *my* comfort; but, oh, Mr. Priestly (forgive my saying, Sir, I am an old woman, and many's the time I have sat and listened to your own father, old Mr. Priestly), Nutleigh Church is very different now to what it was in his day; there was no acting, as I calls those there turnings, and twistings, and bowings as goes on *now;* it was spirit-and-truth worship; and then you tell us (no doubt, Sir, you speaks as you thinks right) that out of the Church of England there's no salvation. Oh, 'tis but seldom I go to hear you now, because I want to hear of my Saviour, and what He has done for my poor soul, which I never hears of at Nutleigh now. I has all this, to be sure, in my Bible there;" and she pointed to where the sacred volume lay on a little table be-

side her, bearing evident marks of being well read and studied well.

"Then, I suppose," returned Mr. Priestly, "we shall have you, Margaret, leaving us, as some few are doing, for Mr. Faithful's congregation. I am sorry for you; I always thought well of you; but, like others, you desert our Mother Church at the moment when she needs most zealously the support of even the poorest of her members, and this only from some foolish opinions, some dissenting nonsense, much abroad, I am sorry to say."

"*No*, no, Sir; it will never come to that with *me* whilst I can read *my Bible*. I learnt *in* the Church of England to know my Saviour, and there's no one more attached than myself to her communion, and it pains me sadly to see the many who leave the Church-worship to go to chapel; but, Sir, if you preached Jesus instead of the Church, if you preached Christ as the way and the door, by which alone we poor sinners can come to God, there wouldn't be as many as goes now to chapel; and when I think of my poor child, and how she felt at the last, oh, I feel I must, as you stand before me there, Sir, tell you. Preach Christ, Sir, preach Jesus; and whether in the Church of England or out of it, all will be well. Belief in Him alone shall save us."

"I should be sorry at such a moment as this to say anything which would appear either severe or unkind to you, Mrs. Lindsay," resumed Mr. Priestly, "especially in such affliction; but I cannot refrain,

nevertheless, from saying thus much—that it is not the duty of the laity to teach their duly nominated and appointed priest his duty ; let those who choose desert the communion of the Church of England, from whatever foolish enthusiasm their over-heated brains inspire them; but, remember this, that those who do so, I do not scruple to affirm, commit a grievous sin. The Church of England IS the true Church of Christ, and can boast of direct apostolic succession, being founded, as the holy Scriptures have it, on the prophets and apostles. I shall now wish you good day, Mrs. Lindsay; but this I must tell you before I go, that I can allow of no interference, on Mr. Faithful's part, with my flock. Those who want spiritual aid are welcome at all times to send for me, and let him keep off my grounds, and rest satisfied with the few misguided ones over whom he has appointed himself teacher."

So saying, he departed, leaving poor old Margaret Lindsay as deeply plunged in grief as before; indeed, perhaps, more so, inasmuch as that the conversation with her *duly* appointed minister had been wholly barren of any comfort.

Margaret Lindsay was one of those who, though in a very humble sphere of life, had a very clear perception of the truth. She had been taught of the Holy Spirit, and had received the knowledge of the principles and doctrine of the Church of England in all its evangelical simplicity. From her youth up she had been taught the Scriptures, and for more

than thirty years had had the blessed gospel faithfully preached at Nutleigh by young Mr. Priestly's father. She had learnt to value the beauty of the Liturgy, taken, as she felt every word to be, from the Bible, and comprising every want of the human heart; but since the good old pastor's death, and that his son had introduced such queer ways, as she called them, and spoke, as she said, a new sort of language, the good old woman had been puzzled and perplexed, and was not, as formerly, so regular in her church-going. It had been a sad grief to her to see her child, who she had hoped to have taught the right way, turn after these new ways, forgetting the Lord who bought her, and looking to the creature; but she had always said it was the high-mindedness only of youth, and had ever assured herself that it would all yet be right with Mabel. Many of her neighbours had taxed her with continuance in a communion of so much error, but Margaret Lindsay persisted in attending Nutleigh Church once every Sunday, and hoped for better in the exaggerated reports they from time to time brought her. She had been very much disturbed by what her poor child had said on her death-bed to Mr. Priestly, and his now recent visit had greatly shocked her, and left her with the most conflicting feelings.

"Built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets!" said the old woman to herself, as the door closed upon Mr. Priestly, and she was left to her sorrow and her reflections. The apostles and pro-

phets! Let's see to the Word. And putting on her spectacles, and drawing her little table (on which her large Bible lay) nearer to her, she turned to the 2nd of Ephesians, 20th verse. "Aye;" but as she found the well-known place, "'Jesus Christ Himself the chief corner-stone.' He didn't say that, but He must be the chief stone. Well, well, we must pray for him. I am sorry he doesn't like Mr. Faithful speaking a word to one, for he is a good man, and there should be no yoke but Christ's;" and she did pray for her minister; and in prayer, as she had often and often experienced, old Margaret found the comfort and peace she had failed to receive at the hands of man.

CHAPTER XII.

"A wisdom, not of earthly mould,
Not such as learned volumes hold,
Not selfish, arrogant, and vain,
That chills the heart and fires the brain."

BISHOP JEBB.

THE sun was setting amidst clouds, most gorgeously and gloriously tinted; the surrounding country over which a haze, the haze of lovely summer, was thickly gathered, was beautiful in the extreme. No sound was heard to interrupt its stillness, but that of birds answering each other at intervals, with the tinkling bells of distant sheep, and the refreshing murmurs of a rivulet, rushing as it met with interruption in its rapid course. It was a balmy summer evening, as Eustace Priestly slowly pursued his way from Nutleigh to dine at Everton, according to Sir Hugh Vivian's invitation. Various, and not altogether comfortable, were his feelings. The past week had been one of rather an exciting character; and the scene at Margaret Lindsay's cottage was very painfully present to him. Whatever were his religious views, we must do him this justice, that his earnest desire and enthusiastic zeal was to develop these, practically believing them to be right. *If* these

views were erroneous and ill-directed, they carried with them his whole heart, his best energies. He was truly sincere; and the check, though unwilling to allow it to himself, which the dying experience of *one soul's testimony certainly was*, stirred up within his bosom feelings which he could not altogether stifle. The poor girl had said that "faith in any Church, clinging to any Church, holding any man's doctrine, instead of the simple Scriptural plan of salvation, was in that hour, when everything earthly fades and becomes as nothing, wholly insufficient to make a death-bed happy." He would try, though vainly, to persuade himself that the reproaches she had made to him, personally, were only the effects of delirium and disease; but they, nevertheless, left an indefinable impression on his mind, which, as the sequel will prove, would have been well for *him* had he permitted them to have had full influence and weight.

Eustace Priestly had been early devoted to the ministry by his excellent father, who, as we have said before, was a devoted servant of the Lord, and the rector, for more than forty years, of Nutleigh. His heart's desire had been that this, his only son, should follow in his course, testifying worthily to the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and labouring earnestly for the welfare of those three thousand souls committed to his charge. He had educated his boy entirely himself; and had marked, with a joy which only a Christian parent can feel, the early

promise of grace, and the taste which the little Eustace displayed for the profession he had so much at heart for him. He watched with pleasure, the gradual development of an enthusiasm of character which, when rightly controlled, and tempered with judicious management and care, would, in after years, if blessed with the teaching and humility imparted by the Holy Spirit, be so helpful to him in the work, the blessed work of converting others; and with fervent prayer, and many an anxious thought, when the time came for the completion of his studies at Oxford (that school of religious controversy), did the good old man watch the effect which daily contact with views so utterly opposed to his own, might have on a mind like his son's. He well knew, in the grievous error of the day, there was much to dazzle and fascinate a young man of his enthusiastic disposition. Like every honest member of the Church of England, he was pained to see, from one of our nurseries of pure Protestant faith, daily disseminating a contagious heresy, giving and substituting, for her truthful and enlightening doctrines, the spurious *traditions of men*, making a *bondage* necessary; very, very far off from the glorious liberty laid down in the Word of God; and reviving customs so nearly verging on the principles of that faith against which, as Protestants, our ancestors made so firm a stand. But he committed him to that Divine Power which, sometimes for His own wise purposes,

permits our best hopes and speculations to meet with disappointment. Happily for poor old Mr. Priestly, he did not live to see how wholly he had been deceived. Educated with the utmost reverence for his father, Eustace had ever bowed with respectful submission to all his religious opinions; and, though upon his first entering on his ministerial duties, and appointment to a curacy, he made occasional visits to the Priory, he sometimes startled him with the expression of sentiments quite at variance with his own evangelical views, the good old man would still persuade himself these only proceeded from youthful ardour, and that his son's apparent humility, in listening to the arguments which he would adduce from time to time, in confirmation of those truths upon which his own soul so steadfastly relied, was an evidence the most unequivocal that Eustace's principles were staunch and untainted.

It was only upon his father's death (when he succeeded to the living of Nutleigh), his mother dead, as well as an only sister to whom he had been much attached, that, called upon now to reside at the Priory, he by degrees threw off the restraint which respect and affection for his deceased parent during his life had to a certain degree imposed on him, and giving full rein to his zeal (not, certainly, according to knowledge), he entered boldly into the spirit of the times, and openly avowed his Tractarian sentiments.

Many of his parishioners saw, with pain and regret,

the many innovations and new ways introduced into Nutleigh Church by their young minister. Among these was Margaret Lindsay, who, fearing to draw away by her influence (for she was highly respected in her humble sphere), still continued, notwithstanding, to occupy her place once every Sunday amongst them. The younger members of his flock, whose imagination, more easily dazzled with what had the semblance of such inspiriting devotion, were most zealous upholders of Mr. Priestly's new doctrines. Others, alas! were constrained, in conscience, to forsake the little church of their forefathers, and join the Dissenters. Among the higher class the Vivian family had ever been on terms of intimacy with their good friends at the Priory, and Sir Hugh was among the first to tell Eustace boldly his mind, still more to declare that if he persisted in carrying things further he must leave his church, and thus they had parted ; and though Sir Hugh's regard for the young man (who he considered only as thoroughly misguided) was by no means diminished, they saw little of each other, except now and then, when, as on the present occasion, he would ask him to dinner. But we have digressed, and must return to the latter, who we left wending his way to Everton, plunged in a deep reverie, from which he was only roused by finding himself at the Lodge gates.

CHAPTER XIII.

"Serve God before the world; let Him not go
Until thou hast a blessing. Then resign
The whole unto Him; and remember who
Prevailed, by wrestling, ere the sun did shine."

HENRY VAUGHAN.

"AND this Mr. Graham is quite opposed in his views, then, to Mr. Priestly?" inquired Lady Ethell Forster of her cousin Emmeline, after a little *causerie* at the open window of her pretty boudoir, inhaling the balmy evening breeze which wafted the delicious odour of some trellised roses.

"Quite, quite opposed to him," returned her cousin. "Still, I think you will like Mr. Graham, though I know little about him; he is a very excellent man, very much liked at Everton."

"Here you both are," exclaimed Lady Adelaide, who at this moment interrupted them. "Aunt Vivian has been asking for you. Dressed, and yet not gone down! You are both grown vastly mysterious. I am in search of my work-basket." And her little lively ladyship flew swiftly on her way, before almost her cousin and sister could reply.

Arm in arm they descended to the drawing-room, where Mrs. Vivian, Mr. Graham, and Mr. Priestly

were assembled. The latter was in conversation with Lady Hetherington, by whose side sat Mrs. Vivian, as Ethell and Emmeline entered. Mr. Graham and Sir Hugh Vivian were talking over some improvements he was desirous of effecting in the new school-room, and in which he desired his aid. A vacant seat on either side of their Aunt Vivian invited the cousins to sit beside her.

"Do you really go, on Friday, dear Ethell?" inquired her aunt; adding, reproachfully, "and I shall have seen *nothing* of you. It is naughty of *you* Emmeline, not to have brought both your cousins to see me. A peep at you of this kind is a most unsatisfactory way of becoming really acquainted."

"Yes, I believe we shall certainly leave this on Friday," replied Lady Ethell, with a smile peculiar to *her;* "but if we do not go abroad, of which mamma has some idea of doing, I think we may return to Everton in the autumn on our road home."

"Indeed, dearest aunt, I cannot allow you to think *me* in fault for not bringing my cousins to Summerfield," interrupted Emmeline; "you must know, besides the heat of the weather, Ethell takes (and a very slight hesitation might have been here perceptible) a very long walk every morning before breakfast; and—then she has been so much occupied in painting, copying our Raphael's Virgin (which she has finished most beautifully), our days have flown away rapidly."

"Nonsense, Emmy!" said her cousin.

"And where do you walk every morning, may I ask?" inquired Mrs. Vivian of her niece.

"Only to Nutleigh, to the daily service," replied Lady Ethell, with a blush, which deepened into *full* rose, as she caught Mr. Priestly's eye for a moment resting upon her; those last words having made him turn round to see who was the speaker.

"I am glad we so perfectly coincide in opinion, Mr. Priestly," said Lady Hetherington. "I do feel there never was a time when the Church needed more support. My love," said she to her daughter, who she now for the first time, perceived was sitting close to her—"Mr. Priestly, Lady Ethell Forster!"—the former made a slight bow, Ethell *thought* a very distant one.

"And do *you* go to Nutleigh church, Emmeline?" asked her Aunt Vivian, in a low voice.

"No, Aunt Louisa; papa does not approve of it. But I have often, I must own, wondered why daily prayers should be, in the Book of Common Prayer, laid down for morning and evening use, if it is considered wrong, as I know many people think it *now*. You, Aunt Louisa, for one, and my Aunt Vansittart, I know, for another, deem it quite High Church."

"My dear child, I do not by any means consider the act of going to church in the early morning wrong; it is only *the principle* on which all these old customs of the early Church are revived, that is so radically wrong. 'The heart,' Emmeline, 'is

deceitful above all things,' says the Word of God, 'and desperately wicked;' and, for my own part, I should say, *especially*, that private prayer, in one's own chamber, is more helpful than going to church daily at (ofttimes), most inconvenient hours too, and *neglecting private* devotion, which our Lord, you may remember, so especially recommended, for the sake (or *act*) of going to church. Never forget, dear child, that the Reformers drew *out of Romish error* our Liturgy; and, though a more perfect Form of Prayer cannot be found, yet, when the daily prayer in church was added to our ritual, it was because true religion was not spread as widely over England as it is now; and it was better to go to church to worship than not to do it at all. Now, prayers, family prayers, are general in almost every house, at least they can be had; and, in my opinion, it becomes a duty, more incumbent upon us (than going off to church), to call together our servants and family, read a portion of God's Word, and ask His blessing on the different duties, daily duties, before us, which He has assigned to each."

Mr. Graham here joined them, but further conversation was interrupted by the announcement of dinner. Lady Ethell found herself at table next Mr. Priestly; and, if Allyne had not very maliciously placed himself almost opposite her, she would have esteemed herself exceedingly fortunate, as she had, with all the romantic exaggeration of a very young person, installed Mr. Priestly in her mind

as a model of perfection, persecuted by her uncle, Sir Hugh, and others, for his highly-exalted views. Besides, Eustace Priestly, notwithstanding his stately reserve, was very handsome.

"We have lost Sir James and Lady Fitzwilliam," remarked Mr. Graham to Mrs. Vivian, as he seated himself beside her at the dinner-table.

"Yes, indeed; and I fear it will be some little time before we have them again at the Abbey, as little or no improvement is visible in Lady Fitzwilliam's health. Miss Sinclair told me yesterday, that her doctor in London considered it might even be advisable, eventually, to go abroad. Louisa is quite inconsolable at the loss of her friends; indeed, we shall miss the dear little girls exceedingly."

"Lady Fitzwilliam was Miss Trevor, the beautiful Miss Trevor, was she not, Hugh?" inquired Lady Hetherington (who, though seated opposite to her sister-in-law, Mrs. Vivian, and next her brother, had caught the sound of Lady Fitzwilliam's name), "a sister, if I remember right, of Lord Grey's?"

"Just so. I was sorry for him in his late affliction. His boy was a very fine little fellow; but I cannot say I ever liked or admired her, though she *was* considered very handsome."

"Have you heard, by-the-bye, Sir Hugh," said Mr. Graham, "of the subscription which has been set on foot, and now actively going on, for the erection of a Roman Catholic chapel at ———? I am told," continued Mr. Graham, "by a mission

of priests, who were bold enough to solicit Sir James Fitzwilliam; but, I need hardly add, without success."

"Oh, yes, I have heard of them," replied Sir Hugh; "but they have wisely passed Everton by, which tells well for our Protestant reputation. I think," he good-humouredly added, "no priest shall ever, to my knowledge, cross my threshold."

"If every one made as bold a stand as yourself, my dear Hugh," remarked Mrs. Vivian, "on this head, we should have fewer of those melancholy cases of conversion to Romish error, which we now so frequently and painfully hear of. It is really fearful!"

"I am afraid, my dear madam, we are greatly ourselves to blame," here remarked Mr. Priestly. "The Church of England has, far too long, continued in an apathy exceedingly reprehensible; and when so much dissent on all sides exists, even in her own bosom, we can hardly wonder at the advantage taken. Restore the unity of the Church, and it will again raise its head in all its once former brilliancy."

"I quite agree with you, Mr. Priestly," ventured Lady Hetherington, in one of her softest tones.

Mrs. Vivian could have said much, but she knew Sir Hugh's very great dislike to religious discussions, and was silent. Mr. Graham felt, too, that it was not the moment, and remained silent likewise.

Lady Ethell Forster's countenance became brightly

animated. It appeared to her as if both her Aunt Vivian and Mr. Graham were at a loss, and this was a triumph. Sir Hugh was the first to break a silence which would have become awkward.

"And what news have you of Hugh?" he inquired, addressing his sister-in-law.

"Indeed, dear fellow," replied Mrs. Vivian, "he appears to get on remarkably well at Sandhurst. We are only now anxiously looking forward to the holidays."

"If he roughs it well there," remarked Sir Hugh, "he will only make the better soldier. I intend paying him a visit when I take Emmeline to Aunt Catherine's."

"You are always so kind!" rejoined Mrs. Vivian.

"By-the-bye, Emmy," continued Sir Hugh, "Aunt Vansittart writes me to-day, that they are to be in town on the first of next month; so we must arrange to meet them there."

"So soon, dear papa? I am always so sorry to leave you and dear Everton. How glad I shall be when I come and live with you altogether; then I shall be quite mistress of Everton, you know!" and she looked up with happy confidence at her father's face.

"And perhaps," said her father, "*I* shall be as glad, Miss Emmy. Aunt Louisa, I think, can testify to my loneliness in your absence; and this year I feel I shall be still more doleful, as Allyne goes to Eton."

"I think, Uncle Hugh," observed the lively Lady Adelaide, "that Ethell or I should stay and take care of you in Emmeline's absence. One of us, at least, could very easily be spared at home. I am sure I should like it above all things."

"I am afraid," replied her uncle, smiling at the ready suggestion, "my dear Addy, you would very soon repent your offer, and find Uncle Hugh as stupid an old man to take care of, as Everton would be, without companions, a wretchedly dull place."

Lady Adelaide laughed, but would by no means allow this to be at all likely. Conversation followed on varied subjects, and was only interrupted by Lady Hetherington's moving, when the ladies adjourned to the drawing-room.

CHAPTER XIV.

"Life's but a transient span;
Wind up the days and set them right—
Vain, mortal man!"

A FEW thunder-drops had fallen during dinner. Everything in the appearance of the sky seemed to portend a coming storm. It was quite out of the question for the young people to take their short stroll, as they were accustomed to do, before tea; but one and all agreed, whilst it was most provoking, the rain was much needed, and would be of great use, the weather had been so dry and overpowering of late. Lady Hetherington sank, with her usual listlessness, into a luxurious arm-chair, opposite to a beautiful likeness of her brother's wife, the late Lady Vivian.

"How like that is to your mother, Emmeline," said her aunt, as she raised her glass to her eye.

"So every one says who remembers poor mamma. You know I can be no judge, as I was too young when she died, even to remember her,"

"It is very like," said Mrs. Vivian, "and very well painted. Allyne, I think, much resembles his poor mother, and Emmeline her father. Do you not think so?"

"Decidedly," returned Lady Hetherington.

"Have you heard from Mrs. Vernon lately, Emmy?" inquired Mrs. Vivian of her niece.

"She never writes to me, Aunt Louisa. I saw her in London, before I came to Everton, on her way to Ivy Tower. She lunched with us in Eaton-square, with my little cousin, Mildred. What a very pleasing young man Mr. Priestly is," said Lady Hetherington; "so well informed, and *apparently so good* a clergyman!"

This was addressed to her sister-in-law, who, however, could not conscientiously concur with the latter part of what she considered ill-merited commendation.

Lady Ethell was the first to reply, with enthusiasm.

"Particularly so, mamma; he appears a perfect clergyman, a most devoted man. He has entertained me all dinner-time with a charming account of the late festival at St. Paul's, Knightsbridge. How much we have lost," she continued; "I should have enjoyed being present *so* much! And then the Institution of the Sisters of Mercy, at ———. What an excellent Institution it seems; there is nothing I should like better than to become *one* at once!" And her beautiful countenance glowed with animation.

"Oh, Ethell, Ethell!" exclaimed her cousin and sister, "that sounds *very* Catholic!"

"Absurd—ridiculous, Ethell!" echoed her mother.

Mrs. Vivian had felt irresistibly drawn to her lovely niece; she had watched her at dinner, the

attentive listener to Eustace Priestly; had noticed the heightened colour and animation beaming in her face, and a pang had shot across her heart that so fair a flower should waste its ardor and healthful energies in religious error. She saw little opportunity of holding any conversation with Lady Ethell; and then came the thought that she might not see her again for years!—and her Christian heart yearned with love and pity towards so young a being entering life, with snares on all sides, and none of them more dangerous than her own highly-wrought imagination. Her dear departed husband's niece, too! She longed to say a word to her, and so resolving, that even before others—even before Lady Hetherington—she would risk it. The gentlemen now joined them, and Mrs. Vivian availed herself of the moment to change her place, and take a seat near Ethell.

Emmeline and her cousin, Lady Adelaide, were engaged with their favourite game of chess.

"And why, dear Ethell, may I ask," inquired Mrs. Vivian, in her soft and affectionate manner, "would you like to become a Sister of Mercy? What may be your attraction?"

Lady Ethell raised her eyes from the work in which she was engaged, and returned her aunt's question with a long and inquiring gaze. Could she have penetrated all her thoughts? Was she, whose religious feelings were, from all she had heard, so thoroughly opposed to anything of the

kind in this question, about to condemn or treat as absurd all that to her ardent mind seemed beautiful and holy? Oh, no! there was something in Mrs. Vivian's countenance so calm, so affectionate, so beaming with benevolence, that it at once inspired her with confidence, and she who had before boasted of there being little fear of *her* entering into religious conversation with Aunt Vivian, found herself doing so, even before she was aware of it.

"Why," she replied, "I think there can be nothing more beautiful and acceptable to the great Creator than devoting ourselves to Him for the good of others, and instead of giving now and then a shilling or so to some charity, about which you probably know nothing, and consequently cannot possibly have any interest, instead of meeting with, as I am constantly hearing of, cases in which gross deceptions are practised, how charming (to my mind) to know, that in belonging to the sisterhood you give up your time, your station, and your means to the good of our fellow-creatures! There cannot be, I think, a more perfect, a more charitable institution."

"Whilst, my dear niece, I greatly admire your desire to be useful to others, do you know," returned Mrs. Vivian, "I think there are many ways of doing real charity in a far more pleasing manner to the eye of Him who weighs our motives as well as our actions, than leaving the station which, in

giving us, he intended us at the same time to adorn, to join *any* sisterhood. Yours, my dear Ethell, though I admit it to be one that permits of much self-indulgence, shutting you out of many an opportunity of witnessing and personally relieving the sufferings of the poorer classes, is still the one in which our heavenly Father has placed you; and believe me, by your influence among those around you, you may glorify Him; besides, the principle which originally gave rise to the formation of this Society partakes too much of the all-sufficiency of works."

"Oh, *is* this charitable, Aunt Vivian? Think of the many, many excellent individuals who give up their all to labour for others, who attend the sick and dying, and pass their whole days in doing good. Oh, there *must* be some among them who do this from love to God!"

"Still, I contend, my dear child, that quiet contentment with the lot assigned us, is always the most pleasing to God. Poor human nature loves *to do* something; and though without fruit faith is nothing, genuine love to the Maker will invariably show itself in care for and kindness to His creatures, and there is just now much abroad, a spirit—and a specious one, too—of *works* rendering us acceptable to God, against which I cannot too much warn you, young as you are, to beware."

They were interrupted in further conversation by

Allyne, who called upon his cousin to sing some of his favourite songs.

Lady Ethell rose, with much good-humour, to comply. Her voice was a very sweet one, combining brilliancy and taste with execution. She had been extremely well taught.

Mr. Priestly was a passionate admirer of music, and presently found himself, as an auditor, more than usually absorbed. There was a pathos and richness in Lady Ethell's silvery tones that found a strange echo in his own heart.

As soon as the two first songs for which she had been solicited were finished, Emmeline approached the piano and requested her cousin to sing a very favourite air (in sacred music) of her father's, from the oratorio of "St. Paul."

Lady Ethell assented, and did it full justice.

"How very beautifully Ethell sings," observed Mrs. Vivian to Lady Hetherington; "her voice is peculiarly adapted to sacred music;" and she arose to express to her niece herself how much she had been gratified.

Mr. Priestly, too, had rarely, if ever, heard sweeter music; and it was with much regret he had to plead his excuse for leaving so early; but it was Saturday evening, and he made it a rule to be particularly early on these days; therefore, with Sir Hugh's permission, he would bid him good night.

Lady Ethell thought, as he bowed to her, he

might have expressed himself pleased with her singing. His bow seemed to her as distant as when he was first presented to her, and yet her girlish imagination had installed him in her mind, from the conversation they had had at dinner, as a most fascinating person.

She excused herself from singing again, after Mr. Priestly's departure, expressing herself fatigued, and resumed her embroidery, whilst Lady Adelaide and Emmeline took her place at the piano, and played some pretty duets for Allyne.

The storm had quite subsided into a settled rain; and Sir Hugh's carriage, which had been desired to be in readiness to convey Mrs. Vivian home, was shortly announced, as she had expressed her wish to return home early.

The party, therefore, broke up; and Mr. Graham very gladly accepted her friendly proposition to take him as far as Everton, on her road to Summerfield.

"Mr. Priestly appeared much engrossed this evening," said Mrs. Vivian, as they drove along. "I thought it bad taste his bringing forward, as he did to my dear brother, his favourite subject of apostolical succession; it was so extremely ill judged; and how very much annoyed he seems with the encroachment dissenting ministers are making in his parish."

"I observed it, my dear madam, with great regret; I had but very little conversation with him; and our views upon religious matters are so widely

opposed that, I may say, Mr. Priestly and myself are little more than strangers to each other. When I think of the truly awful responsibility of our charge as stewards and ministers of the Word, I tremble for those who in any way desire to overmagnify their office, and for one moment lose sight of the Great High Priest, our Divine Master. Ensamples we should be to the flock; not lords over God's heritage."

"Perfectly so," returned Mrs. Vivian; "and yet how widely these errors are spreading, readily ensnaring the young and the weak."

"Alas, it is indeed so!" resumed Mr. Graham. "Called to *proclaim* 'remission,' these High Churchmen would *confer* remission of sins; and most true it is that these errors are very widely, aye, and most insidiously spreading themselves, even where we least expect to see them. Satan is permitted to be very busily at work just now among the children of God, but, doubt not, the Lord Jehovah is gathering in, by various ways and means, His own elect. In every age He has drawn out a society of witnesses for Himself, even as in the natural world; and it is my belief firmly that He is now doing so here."

They had by this time reached the parsonage; and Mr. Graham alighting, with repeated thanks, wished Mrs. Vivian good night.

"What a nice, kind creature, Aunt Vivian is!" said Lady Adelaide Forster to Emmeline, as they ascended the staircase to bed on the night in question.

"Indeed, Aunt Louisa is always much loved when she is known;" returned her cousin; "but you, Ethell, what do you say?" as she turned round upon the first landing leading to Lady Ethell's bed-room to give her a kiss.

"Aunt Vivian is not at all what I thought her!" musingly replied Lady Ethell, returning her cousin's affectionate embrace; "but then, you know, Emmy, I mean by that, from *your* description, she appears most kind."

"Well, I have promised her we will go and spend another hour at Summerfield before you leave," returned her cousin.

"Wednesday or Thursday, you will see, we shall take our departure," rejoined the lively Lady Adelaide; "and, indeed, it will be with regret I take leave of Everton; I vote, therefore, that we go on Tuesday to Summerfield." So saying, she followed her into her bed-room, leaving Emmeline to find her own way to her room.

CHAPTER XV.

"Within this flower, to every eye
So little worth, doth hidden lie
Most rare and subtle fragrancy."

S. WILBERFORCE.

"WELL! Isabella writes most joyously. She was always a happy-minded creature, and so thoroughly unselfish! I quite rejoice with her that at length she tells me they have 'a Home' after having been so long unsettled."

These words were spoken by no other than the venerable Lady Catherine Douglas to her niece Mrs. Montagu, as she laid down on the table, beside her, her letter and her spectacles. Mrs. Montagu, probably our readers may remember, in the early part of our story, as the only sister of Lady Grey, was now with her husband, making her aunt, Lady Catherine Douglas, a visit of a few weeks at the Grange. The post had brought her aunt that morning a long and pleasing letter from Mrs. Vernon an early friend of her own, as well as of her lamented sister's; and it gave Mrs. Montagu as much pleasure as it did her aunt, Lady Catherine Douglas, to hear the pleasant account Mrs. Vernon gave, in her letter,

of herself, her husband, and her little girl. She was delighted at their new acquisition of Ivy Tower by the death of Mr. Vernon's father, and her description of all the occupation she had already embarked herself in, for the good of others, in the way of schools and other improvements, was most glowing and happy.

"Could you not come to us, dear Lady Catherine? and, dear Emily Montagu," she said, "you would show me how to make Ivy Tower like the Grange; and Emily would assist me in reviving a spirit of religion in our little parish, where, though I find much to interest me, it is but slow work; our clergyman is so dead to anything save bare formality, and being, too, an old man, without any family, there is no one to take an active part in what, I believe, should reign very prominently in the heart of every true believer—the earnest promotion of our Saviour's glory. As I have not yet given up being myself governess to Mildred, you can easily imagine that I have enough on my hands; I do not despair, however, later, being able, when things at home shall be brought into a little more order, to profit by your kind wish to see us at the dear old Grange, though at present it is quite out of the question."

"Isabella then gives up altogether coming here just now, you see, my dear Aunt, which I am sorry for," said Mrs. Montagu, as she returned Lady Catherine her letter. "There is little chance in this case of our being able to go to her, as I

rarely get my dear husband to allow himself a holiday; indeed, he grudges our pleasant days at the Grange; and but that with you we are at no real distance, and he can on pressure ride over to the Rectory, I fear I should less often enjoy the happiness of being with you," and she looked affectionately at her old and respected relative.

"Charles Montagu is my *pattern* of a clergyman," returned Lady Catherine; "would there were more like him—fervently zealous in their Master's cause! but I am bent on a scheme," and her bright benevolent countenance lightened as she spoke, "I am bent on a scheme, and that is to go—absolutely to comply with with Isabella Vernon's wish to see us. But still more, Emily, if I go you must be my companion, and Charles too, he may very well give himself this holiday. Mr. Leslie, his curate, is all that he can wish, and a fortnight's absence will only do him much good."

"My dear Aunt Catherine this is a brilliant scheme, and just like one of your happy propositions. If my Uncle Douglas consents, and we can get Charles to do the same, it will be charming. But I see the pony chair is at the door; shall I call your maid?"

Wallace, Lady Catherine's maid, had lived with her for years; she had had the charge of both Lady Grey and Mrs. Montagu, when, as little orphans, they were first consigned to her excellent lady's care. Well accustomed to her ladyship's usual hour for taking her drive, the faithful creature was ready at the door with

her shawl and bonnet, as Mrs. Montagu arose to summon her by the bell. The latter repaired to her own room to prepare herself for the drive with her aunt.

"I have two objects in view my dear Emily," said Lady Catherine, "for to-day's drive," as they seated themselves in the little carriage; "I wish to call at Woodfield, you remember Mrs. Craven, do you not? Then I have a very long-promised visit to Robinson; we will take the school-house in our way. John," she continued, to the little boy who served as her postillion, "I have this little bundle of work to leave at the school."

"Mrs. Craven, dear aunt? oh, certainly, I remember Mrs. Craven; but are they returned to the neighbourhood? I have scarcely seen her since my marriage; they have been living abroad have they not? and is it true, my dear aunt, that Mrs. Craven returned home a Roman Catholic?"

"Alas! too true," replied Lady Catherine; "economy and cheap education was their plea for remaining for the last six years on the continent. Very severe reverses of fortune made it advisable that Mr. Craven should let Woodfield, and it is only this year that, by the death of an uncle, who left him £30,000, he is enabled to come back to the neighbourhood. But Mrs. Craven is returned to us, as you say, an avowed Roman Catholic; her husband, poor man, neither one thing or the other, professes, at least in name, to be a Protestant."

"And the children?" inquired Mrs. Montagu, "I

remember they had several; one of them was a pretty, interesting girl, of ten or twelve."

"Just so," said Lady Catherine; "Lucy, the eldest girl, is now about eighteen, and interested me so much the day they called here, more than a fortnight back, that it is partly on *her* account I feel very anxious to be on terms of intimacy at Woodfield, hoping perhaps to be permitted to be of some use to these young people. Mrs. Craven's conversion to the Romish faith has so completely altered her, you would not know her again; she is become exceedingly reserved in her manner; professes, I understand, in no way to influence her children, who, as yet, bear the name of Protestant; but her confessor, a Jesuit, they brought with them from Italy, acts in the capacity of tutor to her son, now a fine young man of nineteen. Mr. Craven, I understand, has built a small chapel in the grounds for his wife; and Father Giacomo performs Mass daily, I am told. It has been to me a subject of much prayerful consideration, my dear Emily, as to whether, under these circumstances, consistently with my own religious feelings, I *could* preserve still the friendly relations that formerly existed between the families of Woodfield and the Grange; and I trust I have been led right in thinking it my duty to make every advance in my power to them, *without* compromise. Who can tell whether I may not even win back the daughter of my early friend? The young members of the family, too, interest me much—Lucy particularly."

"Always exercising a Christian judgment, my dear

aunt, in all you do! Who *could* resist your sweet example? but is it not fearful to think of the alarming inroads Error is making in our land, in a twofold character? One hardly knows which to dread most, the Romanist in principle (in other words, the Puseyite), or the Romanist in practice—the openly avowed Papist. Charles finds much of this spurious Romanism abroad, among the better class of his parishioners especially. He finds it generally the first step to Popery, this anxious desire to revive old customs in the church, this thirst for reforming the liturgy and our services; all which, I confess, greatly alarms me. Do the young people at Woodfield attend church?"

"Oh, yes," returned Lady Catherine, "the governess is regularly there with two or three of my young friends, and they sit very near me, and now and then Mr. Craven accompanies them. The young man, I have been told, has a very strong tendency to follow his mother, if not already a Romanist; but, I could hardly, at his age, suppose it otherwise, with a Romish priest for his tutor, to whom he is much attached, and who exercises no small influence in the family. Young Craven is heir to a large property, independent of the pretty estate at Woodfield, which, on the death of a relative of his mother's, will be his. This accounts for Father Giacomo remaining so steadily at his post, notwithstanding the many difficulties he has had to contend with; he is much disliked in the neighbourhood, receives no attention from any one but from his pupil, and his pupil's mother; and, I am told, has met

with perpetual insults from members of Mr. Craven's own family. It is only at Woodfield that he reigns supreme."

"And you are actually in hopes, my dear aunt, in spite of this terrific Father Giacomo, to gain admittance—I mean familiar intercourse—with the family at Woodfield! From all you tell me, I shall feel deeply interested in your success."

They had now reached Lady Catherine's school, where Mrs. Needham, the school-mistress, they found engaged in the dismissal of the children.

As each little girl passed her ladyship and Mrs. Montagu, they curtsied low. The former was deservedly loved by all who knew her, and a smile from *her* was esteemed a very great thing amongst the children.

"Are they not leaving school somewhat earlier than usual?" inquired Lady Catherine.

"No, my lady," returned the former, "we generally break up about four o'clock. Your ladyship has heard, I suppose, of poor Robinson's wife; she broke another blood-vessel last night, and I excused her daughter Mary from the working class to-day. Little Jane, her sister, was here; she told me her poor mother was very, very bad, and that the doctor does not think she can live. Mr. Porter was to call there this morning. Robinson, poor man, will take it sorely to heart. She has made him an excellent wife, and been as good a mother, as your ladyship knows."

"Yes, Mrs. Needham, I am on my way to see poor Mrs. Robinson; I heard of her relapse last night, and desired some ice from our Ice-house should be sent to her. You did right to excuse Mary, poor child, to-day; I will leave this bundle with you. It was some work I wished her to cut out and get done at the school as quickly as possible; but it will do when she is able to return.

"My dear aunt," interrupted Mrs. Montagu, "during her mother's illness, I will with pleasure undertake the working-class for you. It will be nothing for me to walk down in the afternoon, until poor Mrs. Robinson is better. It will be only pleasurable occupation for me, and remind me of *Old times.*"

"That it will ma'am," said Mrs. Needham, "and nice times they were some seven or eight years back, when your dear sister, Miss Edith—Lady Grey ma'am, I mean—and yourself used to come down so regularly, and set the girls their work, and you, ma'am, read some instructive book whilst they worked. Many and many's the young woman you have helped on to heaven. There's Mary Robinson—she was in those days quite a young girl—she talks of those days now."

"Well, then," rejoined Lady Catherine, Mrs. Montagu will do me this kindness, and she will then come daily to you. Then Mrs. Needham, we will proceed at once to Robinson's cottage, as I have to call at Woodfield before we go home."

"The young lady (Miss Craven I mean), rode, your ladyship, over a few days since, quite alone, to ask for the address of one of our children, that is to say, only the young gentleman that's ill was with her; oh, how ill he looks, poor young man! it was quite a wonder to see him without Father Jackomy, as they call the priest of Rome, who lives with him."

"Well, good afternoon, Mrs. Needham," repeated Lady Catherine, as the pony phaeton moved; "now to Woodfield," addressing her little postillion.

"How beautiful those woods look in the distance," remarked Mrs. Montagu; "I conclude they are the woods of Woodfield?"

"Yes," returned her aunt; "I will pay my visit first there, as I might be detained longer than I could otherwise spare with poor Mrs. Robinson, and I make it a rule to give myself ample time, when visiting the poor. Nothing appears to me so unfeeling as to enter a cottage, where there is sickness, just to stand and ask a few questions, as if curiosity alone induced the visit, and then hurry away. Visiting the poor, viewed in a Christian light, is not only just to minister to the wants of the body, but the souls of our fellow-beings should occupy our first thoughts, and the spiritual state of an individual will never be ascertained by a few questions. We must show ourselves really interested in the soul's welfare, by a friendly interest in all that concerns them, encouraging them to make known to us their

difficulties, their feelings and drawbacks, and then point them to the Saviour, as the friend above all others."

"Yes, my dear, dear aunt, from you I learnt myself all this. Charles ever quotes you, as so beautifully combining exquisite sympathy for the sorrows of the suffering poor, with the necessary and most essential knowledge of, and acquaintance with, Him whom to know is life eternal. He never enters any cottage without prayer, before he begins any subject of conversation, and never leaves them without reading some suitable portion of God's Holy Word."

"It is what should always be the case," rejoined her aunt. "Real charity, by many, is so differently understood. But here we are," and the little carriage at the same moment entered the Lodge gates.

They had not proceeded far through the pretty winding approach to the house before they perceived three figures issuing from one of the shrubberies. The two outside personages proved, on nearer view, to be no other than young Craven and his tutor, Father Giacomo. Lucy was in the middle; on perceiving lady Catherine, she advanced to speak to her; her brother and his companion slightly raised their hats.

"I hope Mr. Craven," said lady Catherine, addressing the young man, "that you are feeling better, this lovely weather?"

"Indeed, I cannot say much for myself; our

climate is not a very favourable one, and the mornings and evenings are especially trying. I shall not be better until I find myself in Italy, where my physician prescribes an immediate return, and a winter there my only chance." He raised his fine expressive eyes as he spoke, and glanced at Father Giacomo's countenance; the latter's eyes continued fixed on the ground. "You must allow me to introduce Father Giacomo to your ladyship," continued the young man.

The priest bowed very low, but did not look up.

"Shall I find your mother at home?" inquired lady Catherine, of his sister, as the pony-chaise slowly moved on, her young friend walking by the side of it.

"I cannot be sure that you will, dear lady Catherine, but I will inquire, if you will walk in. My mother has been very suffering the last few days. She is extremely anxious about my brother. Cecil's health makes us all unhappy, and this necessary and approaching separation is very trying to her."

"I must introduce you again my dear child to Mrs. Montagu, my niece," said lady Catherine, when they had reached the drawing-room through a pretty conservatory, by which Lucy led them; "you cannot remember her, but she remembers you as a little girl, before you went abroad."

"Mrs. Montagu is very kind," modestly returned Lucy as she left the room, having seen her guests seated. She was not long before she returned, accompanied by Mrs. Craven, whose appearance

too fully justified her daughter's report of her. It required but little to see she was indeed suffering, but to Lady Catherine's eyes, it was very evident the sufferings of the mind preponderated in a far greater degree over bodily pain. Her countenance was drawn, and there was a singular expression of anxious inquiry in the eye, accompanied by a reserve of manner, which checked the very slightest approach to penetrate its depths. Her whole person was emaciated; and she looked far more like the miserable inmate of a convent than the mother of a family, and head of a household.

Lady Catherine Douglas was much shocked.

"And this, then, is what Rome does," she inwardly thought, "for its unhappy victims!—robs them of all peace, and imposes on them that which weak human nature is quite insufficient to perform."

She rose to meet Mrs. Craven, as she entered, and introduced Mrs. Montagu to her; at the same time adding,

"You remember my niece, I dare say, as Emily Douglas?"

"I do, indeed, perfectly remember Miss Douglas, before we left Woodfield, now seven years since; it seems to me ten, Lady Catherine. But," continued Mrs. Craven, "I am much altered since then. I have suffered a good deal lately from anxiety, on my son's account; but pray sit down It gives me much pleasure to see you, Mrs. Montagu. You,

Lady Catherine, were always a very kind neighbour."

"We had the pleasure of meeting your son, in the grounds, as we drove up," returned her ladyship, "and I really thought he was looking better."

"Was he alone," anxiously inquired Mrs. Craven, or was Father Giacomo with him?" and she addressed the last part of her question to her daughter Lucy, who, seated by Mrs. Montagu, was conversing with her.

"Father Giacomo was with Cecil, mamma," replied her daughter.

A slight colour tinged Mrs. Craven's pallid cheek as Lucy uttered the priest's name; but it quickly subsided, leaving her, if possible, more blanched than before, as she continued,

"I am always nervous when my dear son is alone; his health has been so extremely delicate ever since our return from Italy. Our physicians consider it absolutely imperative he should winter in a warm climate; I cannot, therefore, hesitate in feeling it will be best for him; but it is a very great trial, parting with him. Indeed, I hardly know how I shall bear it." Here she became visibly affected with emotion, which was beyond her power to conceal, as she added, "Cecil's lungs are, beyond any doubt, affected. We may never meet again!"

"Let us hope, my dear friend," said Lady Catherine, with her usual tone of encouragement and sympathy, "let us hope that a southern sun, on the

contrary, will do wonders, and restore him to you much improved. There is an Eye that never slumbers, you know, that will accompany *him*, and at the same time *be* with *you*, to sustain you in your trial. Commit your child to *Him*, and all shall be well."

"I am weak, very weak, in faith," returned Mrs. Craven, as she brushed away the tear she had struggled so ineffectually to restrain. "It only shows me how far off yet *I* am from that perfection so much to be admired in the members of our holy faith, and which the discipline of the Church so strongly inculcates."

"Your experience," gently observed Lady Catherine, "is only that of poor, fallen nature. We can only have strong faith when resting our eyes on the *Rock of Ages*, and staying ourselves on His everlasting word. Out of Him we must, indeed, be weak."

Mrs. Craven avoided replying to this; but, with determined effort to master her feelings, added,

"Father Giacomo has promised never to lose sight of him. *He* will be with him—he will watch over him—he will replace me if it is needed, and . . . . It *must be*"—

They were interrupted here by the entry of the object of their conversation, the young man himself, accompanied by his tutor-priest. The latter bowed, as he crossed the apartment to the ladies, and left the room. Cecil sat down by his sister and Mrs.

Montagu, who inquired of him what part of Italy he intended making his winter quarters.

"My physicians recommend Pisa. We shall divide our time between that and Florence; Father Giacomo has friends in both."

"At Florence you may meet, perhaps, my brother-in-law, Lord Grey."

"It would, indeed, give me much pleasure to meet him," returned the young man. "I remember Lord Grey here, well, when I was a boy."

"But," resumed Mrs. Montagu, "my dear Miss Craven, were you not about to tell me something of one of our children at my aunt's school?"

"Oh, yes," returned Lucy, with somewhat of embarrassment, "when my brother came in; of our calling at Lady Catherine's school, to gain the name and address of a little girl, in whom (from some little service she has rendered him) my brother's tutor has taken an interest."

"But we were not aware, until we found her out, *I* assure you, she was one of her ladyship's school children," interrupted Cecil, with some warmth. "The inducements *there* make the children of the poor indifferent and independent of even common kindness from others."

"Her name—do you remember it?" gently inquired Mrs. Montagu of Lucy.

"Eliza Robinson," returned the latter.

"Lizzie Robinson! little Lizzie Robinson! We are on our road to see her mother, who is ill. I

shall reprove my little favourite, if guilty of any want of gratitude for kindness shown her. Mary, her elder sister, was a favourite pupil of mine, when, before my marriage, a few years back, I took much interest in my aunt's school. But I cannot allow *you*," continued she, and she turned to Cecil, " to think we teach independence to our children, much less rudeness or ingratitude. My aunt's chief object is that they should be taught useful knowledge for this life; but, above all other, the reading of God's Word, and learning it, with the earnest hope that it may be received into their hearts."

The young man did not reply, and a short pause followed; when he rose from his seat, and approached the window.

" My dear, dear brother," said Lucy, and a tear started to her eye, " if you only knew how even his thoughts, let alone his actions, are influenced by one who here reigns almost supreme, no wonder he believes we are in fatal error. He has had so much to prejudice him—dear, generous Cecil—against the faith of his childhood—no specimen of inconsistency among, alas! nominal Protestants abroad, that has not been held up to shameful ridicule, and shown forth *to him* as additional proof of the heretic error of our pure faith, and the evidence on the other hand, of the Church of Rome alone possessing *the* truth. But, dear Mrs. Montagu, I must seize this opportunity of explaining to you, what I could not fully do before Cecil, lest I might wound him, for he

is much attached to Father Giacomo. You must know, the latter has been endeavouring to collect together some children to form a school of converts, in the vestry of his chapel in the grounds. Having, as yet, only succeeded in collecting two or three of our servants' children, and a boy of one of our gardener's, an attempt was made to inveigle some of Lady Catherine's children, and opportunity presented itself readily, in consequence of some trifling service rendered Father Giacomo, no less than the picture of some saint or other, which had fallen from his book, and which little Robinson picked up and gave him; a number of these little pictures were given the child in return, which she accepted with delight, very ignorant of their nature; and she was told, as a bribe, that if she would attend Woodfield school (as it is called) she would have others of a similar nature. Of course when the child related this at home, she was prevented; but as my dear brother, in his mistaken zeal (and actuated by Father Giacomo's extreme desire to find out the child and hold forth some greater bribe), was determined to gain some clue, I volunteered to accompany Cecil, and prevent any advantage being taken of the little Robinson."

"And how did you succeed?" inquired Mrs. Montagu, with increased interest in Lucy's recital.

"We traced little Lizzie to your school-house, where we were permitted to say but little, as her elder sister, a modest, pleasing young woman, no

sooner perceived us, than she stepped forward with a small packet in her hand, the identical little pictures that had been given her young sister, very neatly folded in paper, saying, as she returned them to my brother,

"We do not as Protestants address prayers to any but God; neither may we, the Bible tells us, bow down or worship any graven image; there is but one Mediator, Sir, between God and man—Jesus Christ. My mother bid me return these to Mr. Jackomo—(I hope there is no offence)—and say, little Lizzy and myself need no other schooling but what her ladyship gives us here."

"I was very much pleased with Mary's quiet reply, though my dear brother left in much displeasure. This is the version of the story of our visit to your school."

Mrs. Montagu had listened with deep interest to Lucy's detail; she felt her aunt—Lady Catherine's heart would swell with gratitude, indeed, for the victory (as it might be termed) obtained over the *dangerous Jesuit priest,* by one of her little flock. But if this incident interested and affected her, Lucy Craven, herself, came in for a large share of sympathy. A young person, apparently, sincerely imbued with divine truth, standing alone in the heart of Romish error, with all its trickery and slavish bondage, attached to a brother, evidently one of its victims, so soon to be torn from his natural ties and from his country, only to be more and

more brought under the influence of the man, who was fast enslaving his soul—presented to her a sorrowful picture.

"You have much interested me," resumed Mrs. Montagu; "nothing is so gratifying to those who labour for the spiritual welfare of others, as to see, even in a child's testimony, the fruits for yourself. I sympathize most deeply with you in your approaching separation with your brother, but remember, God reigns, and He can give light in the grossest darkness."

"I know it, I know it," returned Lucy, "and my prayers, dear Mrs. Montagu, will be daily offered up, for so loved an object!" She would have continued, but she perceived Lady Catherine had risen from her seat, and motioned to her niece she was about to take her leave.

CHAPTER XVI.

"..... and by faith transform'd,
Afflictions into future glory change,
And weave their Iris out of mortal tears."

A PAUSE followed Lady Catherine's and Mrs. Montagu's departure.

Mrs. Craven appeared absorbed in her own thoughts; and her daughter, for some time after their guests had departed, continued silent.

"Cecil looks ill, wretchedly ill, Lucy!" at length burst from her mother's lips; no one CAN deceive *me!*"

"He does indeed, mamma; one *cannot* be blind to it; and to think he is so soon about to leave us *alone*, to travel alone, without one of his own family to be with him, either to soothe or nurse him in the hour of sickness; it breaks my heart. My dear, dear mother, let me again urge you, for your own peace' sake, let *me* accompany him—his own sister! Oh, let *me* go; do not let him go alone." And she rose from her seat, and knelt beside her mother in the attitude of affectionate entreaty ....."Not *alone*—with Father Giacomo, dear mother."

"Cease, Lucy, to pierce me thus—to pain me thus cruelly. You have urged this before. It *can-*

not be, my child; you cannot bear your brother company; *would, would* it were possible! I myself, his mother, might do so, and never lose sight of him; but it must be as it is. My God"—and she raised her hands as she spoke—"accept my sacrifice! But why, Lucy, why do you continue such uncharitable, such prejudiced hatred, to Father Giacomo? You know he is the esteemed friend and spiritual director of your mother, as well as the attached friend and guide of your brother. Why, then, this dislike, and evident apprehension, of his accompanying Cecil?"

"Alas! mother, I cannot, I dare not say; but the faith you reared me in is so opposed to the one *he* professes!—the one so simple, so full of peace and comfort, stayed on God's Word, the Word of Life; the other so full of darkness and error, building on man's word, and blinding the soul, till it becomes lost in lies and deceit! I cannot help it, but I tremble for the influence that man has over my brother, my dear brother!"

"Your religion teaches you, I should imagine, respect, at least, for your parent, Lucy; and before you permit yourself so strongly to animadvert against the faith your mother professes, it might be well to remember the deference due to her; and with regard to Father Giacomo, as he enjoys your mother's confidence, he merits, and is entitled to, your good opinion." So saying, with marked displeasure Mrs. Craven left the room.

A few tears traced each other down Lucy's cheek as she sat pondering on what had passed between herself and mother.

"It is, it must be, the religion of Antichrist," said she to herself, "that causes such sorrowful severing of ties. The faith of Jesus only strengthens and consolidates human affections. Rome can even make coldness spring up between a mother and her daughter. That Jesuit holds both my mother and my brother's hearts in his sway, if not in his entire keeping."

Her head resting on her arm, Lucy continued in the same place her mother had left her, musing, until the voice, the loved voice of her brother, roused her from her reverie.

"And on what subject is *la sorella mia* so deeply engaged?" said the young man, as he approached her.

"The same, I fear, dearest Cecil," returned Lucy, removing her hand, and looking up into his face—"the old topic—your departure. I had been importuning my mother to allow me to accompany you. I cannot endure the idea of your going alone."

"Alone! I shall not be alone, with Father Giacomo. And pray, my dear sister, how many travel alone, solely for pleasure?"

"True, dearest. But, Cecil, I must be explicit with *you*. I have already displeased my mother; do not let me offend you;" and she laid her arm affectionately on his. "I cannot conceal my dread, my aversion, to Father Giacomo . . . . a

Jesuit, an opposer to *the truth!* I tremble lest he should gain an entire ascendancy over your mind—you so good, so generous. But, Cecil, it is too plain you profess to believe the Romish faith to be the true one. Oh, remember, that you and I were brought up Protestants. Ponder before you renounce the religion of your fathers, of your early youth, for that of persecution, of error, and gross darkness. Oh, search God's Word; give the simple, enlightening faith of Jesus a hearing before you cast it aside; refuse not to accept this;" and she drew hastily from her pocket a small Bible. "I have long watched my opportunity to give it into your own hands. Keep it, and promise me to read it, for my sake, when you are far away; and though, my own brother, I may not accompany you in your travels, this thought will still be my solace. Say you will do this," continued she, eagerly.

"Yes, Lucy," returned the young man, more really, deeply moved, by his sister's affectionate and earnest appeal than he appeared, "I *will* promise to *read* your gift; but I must think you, dearest, too severe on my good friend, Father Giacomo. He only acts up to what *he* professes and thinks right; but he by no means influences me. It is unlike your usual charity, my sweet sister. If I return safe, and much improved in health, you must promise to relent in *his* favour."

A sorrowful shake of the head was Lucy's only reply, and they left the room together.

In the meantime Lady Catherine Douglas and Mrs. Montagu slowly proceeded homewards, the conversation naturally turning upon their recent visit. The latter detailed to her aunt, Lucy's recital, and the defeat of the Jesuit in the Robinson's family's honest and straightforward refusal to accept any bribe at his hands. Lady Catherine was truly gratified.

"Lucy is a sweet girl," continued Mrs. Montagu; "and I can easily understand the interest, my dear aunt, you take in her."

The carriage here stopped at Mrs. Robinson's cottage, and the ladies alighted.

"I am sorry to find you have had a relapse of your former illness, Mrs. Robinson," began Lady Catherine, in her usual kind and Christian manner.

"Your ladyship is always good; I have been indeed ill again," returned the poor woman, rising a little in her bed as she spoke; "and Dr. Brown says, with winter coming on, I must be a bit careful of myself. But the Lord's will be done. If it please Him to preserve my life to my husband and children, 'tis well; but if, on the contrary, it is His good pleasure to take me, He has graciously taught me to rest my hopes on Him as my all in all, and I do not fear to face death. I can trust those I leave behind to His care."

"And your trust, you know, in Him," returned Lady Catherine, "will never be disappointed."

It was very evident, from the tone of simple and

triumphant faith with which Mrs. Robinson spoke, that the Bible, which lay open on her bed, was the source from which all her assurance and comfort had been drawn, and this from constant perusal of the sacred volume.

"It has been very gratifying to me," continued Lady Catherine, "and calls forth our joy and gratitude, that your daughter Mary, one of my oldest school children, should have been enabled to make so courageous an avowal of the truth on the late occasion at the School-house; few things could give me so much real pleasure."

"I wish Mary was here to hear your ladyship say so; she is just slipped out to get me a drop of fresh milk; I had a fancy for some. She spoke, my lady, the truth for us all; for, as my husband and I both said, no child of ours as should ever own one of those painted things. But we all owe much to your ladyship. *You* have taught us, and the Lord has blessed the teaching of His Word."

"You must send for anything you want to us, Mrs. Robinson," said Lady Catherine, as she prepared to wish the sick woman good-bye. "Wallace will give you anything you may require. Do not scruple to send. We will call again shortly on you; and let me know if, at any time, you would like to see me."

The dressing-bell had just rung as Lady Catherine and Mrs. Montagu reached the Grange, and they parted, to prepare for dinner.

"I have had a letter from Reginald to-day, my love," said Colonel Douglas to his wife as they sat down to table, "from Florence, where he speaks of still remaining a while longer, and then proceeding *via* Padua and Venice, to Leghorn."

"No idea, then," observed Lady Catherine, "of returning home at present?"

"Indeed, no; on the contrary, Reginald speaks of fitting up his yacht for a cruise in the Ionian Islands, and visiting Constantinople, the scene at present of so much interest, before his return."

"And the seven churches, I suppose!" interrupted Mr. Montagu. "A friend of ours, lately returned from them, gave me a most interesting description of his travels in that part. And what is to be done with dear little Edith? Is she still to remain where she is?" enquired his wife.

"Reginald," returned her uncle, "mentions something of Lady Fitzwilliam, his sister's, present dreadful state of health; but adds, that Sir James had requested this might in no way interfere with his little girl remaining with them."

"At present you know, dear," said Lady Catherine, addressing her husband, "Sir James and his family are in the Isle of Wight. I heard, the other day, there was some idea of their going abroad; but I am not at all anxious about our dear little motherless girl —they have an admirable young person as governess— one with whom I am personally acquainted, and, indeed, recommended to Lady Fitzwilliam myself, fo

her daughters. So Edith, I know, will be in every respect well cared for."

Various conversation followed; and the evening passed away, as most evenings did at the Grange, until the hour of prayer, in easy, happy interchange of thought and lively conversation; but, before they separated for the night, Lady Catherine had fully gained Colonel Douglas's consent, and Emily Montagu overruled her husband's scruples to allow himself a further week's holiday; and so it was settled that the beginning of the following week they should all go together to Ivy Tower. Lady Catherine's bright scheme had, indeed, succeeded.

CHAPTER XVII.

"And always be for change prepared,
For the world's law is ebb and flow."

ANON.

"I WONDER whether Ethell will still wish to go to Nutleigh to-day?" said Emmeline Vivian to herself, whilst dressing, on the morning following that on which Mr. Priestly and Mr. Graham had dined at Everton.

It was Sunday and a beautiful morning; the storm of the preceding evening had refreshed and cleared the air. She drew up her window-blinds, and looked out on the lawn—the smooth, nice lawn, with its pretty evergreens, and the park beyond, where the dew lay *so* heavy; the rooks, too, cawing among the old trees—a sound so familiar to Everton, and one that Emmeline loved so much!

"Poor Everton!" thought she, as she turned away from the window, "I am always sorry to leave it, and the time is drawing very near. Oh, how I should like to know whether Ethell still intends going to Nutleigh," she continued musingly, and she rang the bell for her maid to dress her. "I never told Aunt Louisa last evening of our intention; I a

Papa will think it strange. However, I promised Ethell, and I must not appear afraid."

With this resolution, therefore—her toilette completed—Emmeline lost no time in descending to the breakfast-room, where she was greatly relieved from having, herself, to make the important request of her father for the pony carriage to Nutleigh, by her Aunt, Lady Hetherington, having anticipated her.

"By all means," said Sir Hugh; "Emmy and I manage always to walk to Everton Church, it is so near; but for Nutleigh—the carriage and my pew, my dear Horatia, are both at your service."

Had Emmeline consulted her inclination alone, she would have decided on, as usual, accompanying her father to church; but the fear of ridicule, and Ethell who would *certainly* laugh at her for weakness; this was insupportable—so to Nutleigh, at the usual hour, she accompanied her aunt, Lady Hetherington, and cousins, Ethell and Adelaide Forster. Mr. Priestly had just effected the different changes he had so long wished; the pews were all open and alike—the most of them arranged so as to face the communion table—or, as it was strictly termed with Mr. Priestly and his congregation, "The Altar;" two conspicuously tall candles, in massive silver candlesticks, stood on this designated altar, and a moderately sized vase of flowers likewise decorated the table. The painting—a beautiful one—to which we have before slightly alluded—represented the truly Romish error of superior authority delegated to St. Peter by our Lord, in

the gift of the keys, had recently been placed likewise above. Texts of Scripture, in every colour, and in old English characters, were to be seen on every side, lining the walls, and presenting to the eye a singularly motley appearance. On each side of the rail, of what in the Church of England is called the communion table, stood little boys, of various ages, dressed as choristers, who chaunted the service; Eustace Priestly, with the aid of his curate, intoning, as was his custom. A magnificent organ, for the size of the church, assisted greatly the effect produced. It was altogether a strange contrast to Emmeline, who had not for many years, almost since she was a child, attended Nutleigh church; it was so very different from the simple, unostentatious, and devotional manner in which service was performed at Everton. The chaunting distracted her, and the intoning entirely hindered *her* power of joining in prayers she had ever admired hitherto; in vain she tried to collect her thoughts—they would wander; for though she held her Book of Common Prayer in her hand, Emmeline found it difficult to follow regularly. The congregation seemed devout, if attention, which proceeded apparently more from some inward determination to keep their eyes nailed to their books, as a *positive duty*, might be termed devotion. Emmeline glanced at her cousins. Adelaide's eyes were fixed downwards like the rest; but Ethell, "How beautiful she looks," thought Emmeline; all animation and excitement, her very soul seemed engaged; and her musical voice could be

heard, occasionally, above the others. Alas! the proud exultation that beamed in her eye, betrayed an utter deficiency of those lowly influences of the gospel, only to be met with in the genuine follower of Christ.

On opening his discourse, Eustace Priestly referred his hearers to James ii. 24; and, in the energetic spirit of his character, impassionately directed them to the imperative necessity of works—expatiating very unhesitatingly on their merits in assisting the great plan of salvation, with far too great a latitude. In vain did Emmeline listen for a word of Christ—through whom alone acceptance could be found. The three R's—so necessary in a gospel sermon—Ruin, Regeneration, and Redemption, were wanting; all was dead and cheerless.

On their return home, they found Sir Hugh and Mrs. Vivian, just returned from Everton Church. Luncheon was ready, and they repaired to the dining-room together.

"We have been so charmed with Mr. Priestly's arrangement of his pretty little church!" said Lady Ethell, as she sat down; "for myself I think it quite perfect."

"And Mr. Priestly into the bargain, my dear cousin," added Allyne, provokingly; but Ethell heeded him not.

"Mr. Priestly gave us an excellent sermon," observed her mother.

"And so did our good friend, Mr. Graham, rejoined Sir Hugh; "the more I hear and see of him the

better pleased I am. I hope, my fair nieces, as you deserted us this morning, that you will at least favour my little parish church, and its minister, this evening?" and he looked good-humouredly at them as he spoke. It would have been ungracious to refuse—Ethell felt herself, obliged, therefore, reluctantly to assent, quietly inquiring at what hour their evening service was.

"Half-past six," replied Emmeline. "On Sundays we always have cold dinner, and punctually at five, to enable, as Papa says, those of our servants who can, attend evening service."

"Are you coming with us to the school this afternoon, dear Emmeline?" enquired her Aunt Vivian, as she now rose from the table, after a slight glance at her watch.

"Yes, certainly, I am quite ready," returned her niece, and they left the room together.

Lady Hetherington excused herself in the evening from again accompanying the little party to church. At home, her ladyship rarely attended divine service twice, when in the country; though she was particularly regular at St. Paul's or St. Barnabas's, both morning and afternoon, when in town. Lady Adelaide and Emmeline volunteered, at the time appointed, to walk with Uncle Hugh and Allyne, as the evening was fine, whilst Lady Ethell preferred accompanying her Aunt in the carriage.

The candles were lighted in the reading desk and pulpit, as they entered the small, but beautifully neat,

parish church of Everton. It was a pretty sight to witness every corner filled, and the seats for the poor, up the little aisle, so thronged. Many an anxious face was turned towards the desk, from where, Sabbath after Sabbath, they were accustomed to hear, so faithfully preached, the Word of Life. But now, as the ladies entered, and proceeded towards Sir Hugh's pew, at the end of the church, the wondering gaze was for a moment drawn to admire the young lady, Ethell, Sir Hugh's lovely niece, and many a well-known face met a glance of kind and silent recognition from Mrs. Vivian, as they moved to their seats.

And now began our beautifully impressive evening service; the "Glory to thee, my God, this night" being very sweetly sung by some of the school-children, taught by Mrs. Vivian herself.

Mr. Graham did the whole duty as usual, reading the prayers of our Liturgy with that devotion which enabled those who joined to feel that they were engaged in that noblest of all man's acts, prayer and praise. The congregation responding audibly, too, seemed to assure that their hearts accompanied their words. Mr. Graham ascended the pulpit when the prayers were over, and glanced around his little congregation, with almost a feeling of pride, as he gave out the hymn before the sermon, and beheld every corner of the small edifice so crowded. But gratitude to Him who had called him to this high office, deep gratitude was predominant in his heart, when he recalled to himself the first time he had

preached at Everton to almost an empty church; *now*, what a change! Through the blessing given to *his* ministry, how many had been led to seek the house of God!

Not a sound disturbed the deep silence that prevailed, as Mr. Graham stood up and gave out his text, from 1 Cor. iii. 11, "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." And beautifully he proceeded to show the utter futility of man's attempting any other but the gospel plan of salvation, humbling though the doctrines might be to the natural man, taking from him all righteousness, all dependence, and showing him up to himself as utterly vile, and cast away; hedged in, without any means of finding acceptance with a just and offended God, save in the one way, even by Jesus *alone*, the way, the truth, and the life—the foundation laid—the alone surety to build on.

"Never should it be forgotten," continued the faithful preacher, "that if once the principle be admitted, that the work of Christ did not finish completely the work of man's salvation, so that nothing justificatory on man's part can be added to it, there would be no end of the complimentary sacrifices that man, in his darkened conscience, would not think necessary to secure his safety, or to augment his felicity. 'Justification by faith alone' was emphatically called by Luther, our great Reformer, '*the article* by which the Church of Christ must stand or fall.' The Christian's good works,

my brethren," said Mr. Graham, as he concluded, "are performed, not as a price paid for glory aspired *to*, but as an evidence of gratitude *for* salvation already gained; *not* as a *supplement*, to fill up deficiencies in Christ's work, but as evidence of conviction of its all-sufficient fulness."

"Ah, ma'am! that has been the word of truth, and it has been a word of comfort to me," said old Margaret Lindsay, as Mrs. Vivian passed her, and stopped to speak to her in the porch of the church, where the poor old woman had waited to have a word with one ever kind and feeling to her.

"I am glad of it, Margaret. The Lord has been very gracious to us, in giving us such a preacher as Mr. Graham," said Mrs. Vivian. "May his word be blessed indeed to you! I am intending to see you shortly."

The carriage was waiting, and Mrs. Vivian found Louisa and her nieces already seated in it. Silence prevailed as they went home. Ethell, in particular, was peculiarly silent. Little did she know how earnestly was her aunt's heart lifted up in prayer, as the carriage slowly rolled along, that the word of life and truth, preached that evening, might take deep root in, and be abundantly blessed to, the heart of her interesting niece.

To Emmeline's inquiry, as she wished, as usual, her cousins "good night," in their room, how Ethell had liked Mr. Graham, Lady Ethell, with a certain degree of dryness, replied,

"I think it excessively wrong to criticise, or censure, those who are placed over us in holy things; but if you ask me candidly my opinion of Mr. Graham, I should say, he could hardly belong to the Church of England, his preaching is so decidedly that of a Dissenter. Our morning's discourse was excellent indeed. Such a man as Mr. Priestly must be a blessing to his parish."

Lady Hetherington's letters the following morning obliged her to leave a day sooner than she had intended. Lord Hetherington awaited them in town, on his way to Alton Tower, where a large party was expected.

During the course of the day, Mr. Priestley called at Everton, and received a very gracious invitation from Lady Hetherington, that when in London he would not fail to visit them at their splendid mansion in Belgrave-square. Mrs. Vivian also called to wish them farewell, having heard from Allyne that they were to leave the following morning; but Lady Ethell steadily avoided all conversation with her aunt.

"Well, well," said Sir Hugh, as he handed his sister and nieces into their traveling carriage, whilst Emmeline stood at the door, bidding them good-bye, "you must come and see us again when Emmeline takes her place here, which I hope she will do next year. I begin to feel somewhat lonely as I grow older."

"Poor Sir Hugh! in less than a year he was

numbered with the dead! It was years before Lady Vernon visited Everton again; but when she did so, things and people, even the old place itself was changed.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"Oft breathes Simoom, and, close behind,
A breath from God doth softly blow."

ANON.

"VERY nicely played, Mildred, darling. I must, indeed, congratulate you on the rapid improvement my little girl has made, Miss Howard," said Mrs. Vernon to her governess, as her pupil rose from the magnificent instrument, one of Pleyel's best, which occupied a prominent place in one of the large reception-rooms at Ivy Tower, and on which she had just finished playing one of her first performances, with no small feeling of pride at having at length attained the honour of playing on *mamma's* piano.

"Mildred has so correct an ear, and is so fond of music, I expect she will soon astonish you, as she takes great pains, my dear madam," encouragingly returned Miss Howard.

Mildred looked up gratefully at her instructress. Naturally timid, a word of encouragement was always half the business with her; and to-day her sweetly animated countenance looked unusually happy. She had *mamma's* praise *this* morning, as well as that of Miss Howard, of whom she was very fond.

"Well, I am, I must say, very much pleased;"

continued her mother. "Expecting some very old friends in a few days, I should like you to play as nicely to them, my dear little girl."

"Aunt Mildred will be here, too, to-morrow; and cousin Emmeline, mamma, and Stuart, will they come too?" inquired little Mildred.

"Yes, my love, they are coming. Miss Howard, I should like Mildred to be as much in the air as possible; I fancy she looks pale," said Mrs. Vernon, as the former, with her little pupil, was about to leave the room.

"We always," dear madam, "take advantage of fine weather; and, when it admits of it, we take a walk before dinner. But we will attend to your wishes on this head; and, as the sun is shining so brightly this morning, we will go out now."

A few moments had scarcely intervened, and the door closed on Mildred and her governess, before Mr. Vernon entered the spacious apartment they had just left, in search of his wife; but she was no longer there, having proceeded to her own pretty sitting-room at the end of the suite.

"Oh, you are here!" said he, as he opened the door, and found her seated, as usual, at her writing-table; "I have been looking for you everywhere. My friend, George Picton, writes me pressingly to join him at Kinfauns, where they have a large party grouse-shooting; and Lilford writes me, you see, to-day (and he handed Mrs. Vernon the letter he held in his hand), to go down with him on the

20th, as he is expected to be with them about that time."

"But you forget, dear, that Lady Catherine Douglas, and the Montagus are to be here the day after to-morrow. Let us see—to-day is the 17th. I shall be so sorry if they *must* find you absent."

"But surely, Isabella, you must see I cannot help it. I am not, I suppose, required to give up a pleasant shooting-party, just because your friends choose to fix the very day I start, for coming to you."

"Oh, no! I must make the best excuse I can for you, my love; and some other time, perhaps, they may be more fortunate. Of course, on this occasion—it is impossible;" and the amiable wife suppressed the sigh that was ready to escape her.

"The day after to-morrow, did you say? It is abominably provoking, annoying in the extreme! But, of course, I shall have to stay. I must write to Lilford, and put him off to the 25th—perhaps have to go down alone, after all."

Mrs. Vernon's face brightened.

"How kind of you, Horace, dear!" and she rose to thank him with a kiss, for what she thought an immense concession. "If it really will not put you to any great inconvenience, this will make me very happy. And you know Mildred's birth-day is on the 23rd, so it will be delightful, your being able to stay with us over that."

"Where is Mildred?" inquired Mr. Vernon, with half sullen, half returning good temper. A small

thing easily put him out; and this necessary change in his previously arranged plans had not assisted to improve his natural irascible temperament. "The weather is fine, and I thought to give her a riding lesson this morning, if she is at home."

"I will ring and enquire immediately," said Mrs. Vernon; and she touched the bell. "She will only be too charmed, dear child. Tell Miss Vernon to prepare for a ride with her papa," continued she, as the servant obeyed the summons. "How soon, dear, will you be ready?" and she turned enquiringly towards her husband, whilst the servant waited his answer.

"Oh, I must first write my letter to Lilford; but stay, I can do that when we come back. Immediately, then," returned Mr. Vernon; "and let my horse and Miss Mildred's pony be brought round, Watson."

In less than a minute the man returned.

"Miss Mildred and Miss Howard are just gone out for their walk, Sir. Shall I still order your horse, if you please, Sir?" inquired Watson.

"No," returned his master; "I shall go to the stables myself. As usual!" said Mr. Vernon, as the servant closed the door, with no small discontent in his looks and tone, "one never can do what one wishes. When *I* want her, Mildred is never to be had."

"It really is most provoking," replied his wife.

"I quite forgot I sent them out early this morning; but another day, dear, if you would only tell me the hour you would wish to have her, she shall be ready."

But it was in vain that poor Mrs. Vernon amiably endeavoured to meet her husband, and restore him, in some measure, to good humour. Her efforts were doomed, on this occasion, to meet with no success. He left the room muttering audibly his annoyance.

It was evening, and a bright, bright lamp was burning in the centre of a nice, round, polished, rosewood table, in one of the large drawing-rooms of Ivy Tower, on which lay books of every kind, as well as many other little *objets de luxe*, invariably to be found in the dwellings of the rich and noble. At the table (listlessly turning over the pages of one of the "Books of Beauty" of the last season), sat a young girl, about sixteen years of age. At her side stood one much younger. Little more than seven summers could have passed over her fair brow; her bright auburn hair hung in long curls round her small head; one of these had fallen carelessly upon the shoulder of her elder companion, whose waist she encircled affectionately with her slender arm. The eldest of these was Emmeline Vivian, the youngest, her lovely little cousin, Mildred Vernon. At the further end of the room, and near the fire, were four ladies. In a comfortable arm-chair, half reclining, sat Lady Catherine Douglas, with Mrs. Vernon at her side, engaged in close conversation;

whilst opposite, at a little work-table, deep in the mysteries of a new crochet stitch she was learning, sat Lady Vansittart, Mrs. Montagu being the good-natured instructress.

"And your birth-day is on Thursday, Mildred," said her cousin, as they sat side by side, as we have described above; and what is to be done in honour of your *fête* on that day?"

"Oh!" half whispered Mildred, turning round to assure herself there were no listeners ere she replied, "Oh! you must know, Emmy, Papa does not like birth-days, *particularly;* but mamma does, so I am to have charades; that is, I suppose, for you, and the Miss Lamberts, and the Effinghams, who are coming, because they are young ladies, like you, Emmy, much older than me, you know; but *I* am to have Snap-dragon, and the Magic-lantern, *if* Papa—will—only do it himself, because nobody does it like papa."

"And, and a dance! a dance! too, Miss Mildred," said Stuart Vansittart, who had entered the room unobserved, and crawled under the table quite unperceived, but now startled his cousin by his sudden appearance.

Mildred laughed heartily.

"How you frighten one, Stuart," said Emmeline.

"You have grown very nervous of late, then, I should say," returned her cousin. "I have heard all your secrets, Mildred," said he, sitting down on half of the same chair with his little cousin. "But

we must have a dance on Thursday, and you shall be my little partner."

"Well, you must ask papa, Stuart; mamma will not do for *that*. *You* must ask papa; but do not say for my *birth-day*, you know. Not now, though," continued she, confidingly, "not now," as she looked up and perceived her father, with Colonel Douglas and Mr. Montagu, entering the room after dinner.

Thursday night—the wished-for Thursday—arrived! The drawing-rooms were thrown open *en suite;* and, according to Mildred's innocent wish, in her mother's boudoir, at the farthest end, the giant magic-lantern (the gift of poor Lady Grey) was displayed (to the delight of all the children assembled) by Mr. Vernon, who did it full justice. The large centre room was left for charades and dancing; and Miss Howard had good naturedly offered her services as musician for the young people.

"What a fairy your little daughter is, Mr. Vernon, and how gracefully she dances," said Lady Ann Effingham, as she stood with him, surveying the little dancers, in the quadrille, formed before them, in which Mildred and her cousin, Stuart Vansittart, as well as her ladyship's two plain little daughters, formed a part. "How old is she?"

Mr. Temple smiled one of his good-humoured smiles.

"Who, Mildred, Lady Ann? Indeed, I believe she is eight; but I really am not sure."

"Pray do not overheat yourself, my dear boy,"

anxiously observed Lady Vansittart, to her son, more than once during the evening, without, however, much attention on his part.

Charades followed the merry dance; and it was fully midnight before the young people separated to their different homes.

"Mildred! Mildred! Emmeline!" screamed Stuart Vansittart, the following morning, as he ran hastily up the stairs leading to his cousin's schoolroom, where he found the young ladies. "I have been looking for you both. Uncle Horace is going to ride with Mr. Montagu and Colonel Douglas, and he says Mildred can have her pony, and I another; that is to say, either you or Mildred; but *you* don't care about it, I dare say, Emmeline, and Mildred does. So"—

"Thank you; as it happens, I do not care about it. I have not, moreover, my riding-habit here; but *you* are, as usual, vastly polite. Mildred, I dare say, will be very happy to go."

"May she, Miss Howard?" continued Stuart, not heeding his cousin's sarcastic tone. "May Mildred come?"

The latter's face was instantly lit up with its brilliant expression, and she only waited her governess's permission to fly to prepare herself. She had been poring over her German dialogues, in readiness for Miss Howard's calling her for the repetition of her lesson; but her thoughts had been wandering back, in spite of herself, to all last evening's

delight, and it was vainly she had endeavoured to get further than "das Wetter ist herrlich," etc., etc.

Joyfully she laid by the odious task, and obeyed Miss Howard's directions to get herself ready.

"Well," said Mrs. Vernon, as from the windows she witnessed her darling child mount her beautiful pony, and, with her father, Colonel Douglas, Mr. Montagu, and Stuart Vansittart, ride away, "now they are gone, what shall we do?" and she turned to Lady Catherine and her friend Mrs. Montagu.

"Quite at your disposal, my dear Isabella," replied Lady Catherine.

"And I shall be the same in one minute," said Mrs. Montagu; "I am only just concluding a note to the Rectory."

"Well, I propose taking you to visit my school, as we have nothing else in particular to do. You know, dear Lady Catherine, I wrote you how much I wished for yours and Emily's valuable hints, and I should like you to see it. I have had a good deal to contend with since we came here; and as yet I have been able to effect little or nothing. Our neighbourhood is Puseyite in the extreme; our clergyman, the rector, the highest of High Churchmen; and, with the exception of one or two families, I stand quite alone. Mr. Vernon's father endowed the school with £1,000, so that I have naturally a first interest in it; but it has been so long managed by a committee of ladies, I find it difficult, with a single voice, to make, all at once, the different alter-

ations I would wish. You sent me, you know, dear Emily (as the nomination of the schoolmistress, on its becoming vacant, rests with me), one of the most excellent young women I ever met with, from Hereford; but the martyrdom poor Margaret Kennedy endures is not to be told, with the rules desired to be observed by Lady Ann Effingham, Mrs. Newton, and others of our neighbourhood, who, one and all, make our poor school a very bone of contention, between what should and what should not *be*."

"Alas! alas!" returned Lady Catherine, "the votaries of Puseyism are, indeed, fearful opposers to the truth; like the Pharisees of old, make clean the outward man, but inwardly aim at the overthrow of the *gospel* plan; consequently, your views and theirs must be thoroughly at variance, and I can well understand your difficulty, my dear Isabella. It can only be met in the way that every other delusion of our arch enemy must be met—with the Word of God in our hands. But let the Spirit of God only apply the Word of Truth to our souls, by convincing the heart of sin, and Puseyism, as well as every other cloak for the unconverted heart, must disappear."

"I am ready now, quite ready;" and Mrs. Montagu rose from the table at which she had been writing."

"We will, then, take our walk immediately," said Mrs. Vernon, "to the school; it is but a very short distance from the lodge gates."

The young schoolmistress, Margaret Kennedy, was much pleased to see the ladies, but especially Mrs. Montagu. The school was unusually well attended, not a bench being unoccupied. The children went through their ordinary routine; and exhilarating it was to see so many young faces, blooming with health and strength.

"Mr. Fairside, if you please, ma'am, was here last Thursday," began Margaret; "and Lady Ann Effingham afterwards. Her ladyship left some Tracts, or papers, with portions of the Bible, and explanations, which her ladyship desired might be used in class, after you had first seen them, ma'am, instead of the children taking their Bibles, as usual, and receiving the explanation from their teachers; as her ladyship said so much time was lost in this way. But indeed, ma'am, we have never found it so. No one can explain nicer than Miss Lambert does, when she comes and takes a class, or either of the young ladies from ———."

"Well," said Mrs. Vernon, "leave the Tracts, Margaret, for the present; and, on the next committee-day, I shall notice *them*. Continue, as usual, to read the Bible first; and, if you are asked, you will say that Mrs. Vernon desired it should be so."

The ladies were preparing to leave, when Mrs. Montagu was attracted to a little ruddy-faced child, whose pinafore was held tightly compressed between his fingers, whilst big tears chased one another down his cheeks.

"Johnny Forrest is crying," said Margaret (seeing Mrs. Montagu's attention was excited by the child's distress), "poor little fellow, because he is here to-day without Carry, his sister. Mr. Fairside, he tells me, called on his mother, and told her that he would not allow her to return to the school unless she gives up going to chapel, which sometimes I know she does, with her mother. Carry's mother has been here this morning, crying herself about it, as the child is very fond of school."

The door here was opened before Mrs. Montagu could reply, and no other than Mr. Fairside presented himself. On seeing Mrs. Vernon, and, evidently, friends with her, he advanced towards them, bowing in his usual very courteous manner.

"Good morning, Mr. Fairside," said Mrs. Vernon, allow me to introduce to you Lady Catherine Douglas, Mr. Fairside; Mrs. Montagu, Mr. Fairside—very old friends, who are now staying with us."

Mrs. Vernon forbore making the remarks she had at heart to do, before the children (particularly as Mr. Fairside had only called with a note for Margaret Kennedy, to give to the clerk, as she lodged with his wife).

They left the school-house together, without entering into any particular topic, save and excepting some desultory remark upon the weather. Mr. Fairside, it must be acknowledged, never felt at ease with Mrs. Vernon, kind and amiable as she was. He would, at any time, infinitely have preferred a

walk with, or a visit from, her husband. He was well aware, in religious views, how opposed they were to each other. Lady Catherine Douglas's religious reputation, too, was well known to him; he would gladly have found himself, in consequence, anywhere but in the present company; but as their road, unfortunately, for a little way, lay in the same direction, there was no help for it—there was no escape.

"I hope we shall have you, my dear Sir, at our next Wednesday's committee," said Mrs. Vernon, as they approached the lodge gates, their point of separation. "I find some of our ladies are desirous of making new rules, which we must canvass a little before we adopt them; and on this occasion I shall hope to have your vote on my side," good-humouredly smiling as she spoke.

Mr. Fairside's usually placid brow became slightly clouded, as Mrs. Vernon uttered these last few words.

"May I ask, what are the rules proposed which are objectionable to yourself?" he enquired, his countenance resuming its wonted composure.

"Oh, we will discuss these on Wednesday, my dear Sir; I dare say I may, as usual, stand alone; but I shall, I hope, have your support."

Mr. Fairside raised his hat, and bowed to the ladies, and continued his way to his own house.

CHAPTER XIX.

"And thus deceiving each and each deceived,
Men gild the hour, and call it happiness."

"AND this is Paris!" exclaimed the lively Marian Fitzwilliam, "actually Paris!" as she stood at the windows of a *troisieme* at l'Hotel Meurice, in the Rue de Rivoli, and gazed at the varied objects passing by in such quick and rapid succession. "Look Anne," said she to her sister, "look at the Tuileries opposite to us; how gay those charming terraces look! I wish dear, good Miss Sinclair would take us out."

"So she will, Marian, when mamma's hour's reading is over," replied her sister, who was busily unpacking some little treasures.

"How very high we are from the street," observed little Edith, who was vainly endeavouring to look below.

"Dear old Paington! see, there it is;" and Anne held up a pretty sketch of the Abbey—one that Miss Sinclair had taken the day before they left home, and had given it to her—and which she was now very desirous of hanging up in their room.

"Well, Anne, you are a funny girl," observed

Marian, laughing, "to be there looking at that now, instead of admiring what is so new to us."

"I can do both," somewhat gravely replied her sister; "you forget that it is more than three months since we left Paington; I like to look at the dear Abbey!"

"Well, I think it delightful travelling—I would go on and never stop; only," said Marian, "I like France much better than England! Just see how amused we were yesterday, passing through all those towns. Don't you recollect, Edith, that funny old woman at Amiens? Was it not Amiens or Rouen where she sold us those little cakes—and kept saying to us, '*Ah! çà, ma petite dame! merci, ma petite dame!*' and how the people crowded round the carriage? the poor people! French is such a pretty language too!"

"I do like France, too," said little Edith, "like cousin Marian. But I wish we might go out in that pretty garden! I see so many little girls playing there;" and Edith, with the help of a chair, had got herself up, so as to have a full view of the Tuileries gardens.

Miss Sinclair now joined them. But before we proceed further in detail, it may be as well to give my readers some account of the Fitzwilliams since we last heard of them.

Lady Fitzwilliam's health had not improved as much as had been expected from her residence of two months in the Isle of Wight. Her physicians con-

sidered it more advisable, that before she again returned to Paington Abbey, and before the winter set in, she should remove to the continent. It was towards the last days of October, or rather, the first week of November, that the young people, as we have just detailed, found themselves in Paris. It was now an established rule that Miss Sinclair read to her ladyship for one hour, at least, every morning. She seldom made any remark during the time—which was sometimes for *two* hours — that this amiable young woman remained in her presence; but she was no longer the haughty, supercilious woman she had been —rather more indifferent and melancholy, and very reserved—courting pity far more than any other feeling.

The morning in question, which was that succeeding their arrival in Paris, Miss Sinclair was about, as usual, to take her leave, when Lady Fitzwilliam stopped her.

"I would like to see the children some time to-day, Miss Sinclair. When do you walk?" listlessly enquired her ladyship.

It was the first time for months she had made this request herself. When the little girls had presented themselves to enquire for their mamma, hitherto, it had always been in the company of their father, or Mrs. Graham, their mother's stern maid; it was most unusual for her to ask for them alone. Miss Sinclair hailed it as a sign of amendment.

"I was proposing a walk in the Tuileries, or the Champs Elysées, this morning—but, as your ladyship

pleases, either before or after our walk; Anne and Marian, as well as little Edith, will be very pleased to pay you a visit."

"On your return, then, let them come here," repeated Lady Fitzwilliam, and Miss Sinclair left the apartment.

"Here you are, dear, kind, good Miss Sinclair, won't you now take us out?" exclaimed Marian, as her governess entered the room.

"Yes, my dear children, I am come for this very purpose."

"And how is mamma to-day?" echoed both little girls.

"I am disposed to think your mamma somewhat better," replied Miss Sinclair, "but her progress we must expect will be but slow. Go, now, and get yourselves ready for your walk, and, upon our return, your mamma has expressed a wish to see you."

With joyous alacrity the children obeyed, and they were soon mingling among the numerous walkers in the *riant* gardens of the Tuileries. To an English eye, for the first time looking at these gardens—the constant resort of the French of all classes, all ages, and of both sexes—it is, indeed, truly dazzling, to say the least of it. We speak not of the wide difference of the atmosphere we breathe in Paris, with that of London, with all its sterling virtues, its smoke and fog; there is gaiety, turn which way you will, in the varied scene before you, unmistakeably enlivening and cheering. Nevertheless, the veritable Anglais, with

the solidity of his character, soon tires of everlasting change, and turns, with renewed zest, and with feelings of grateful affection to his own native land—his home, after a few months, if not weeks, of a sojourn in the gay capital. How many leave our shores, wearied and overdone in mind and body, from too close attention to business or literary pursuits, who have to thank Paris for the totally varied change in their health, which a temporary stay in its merry city has effected; and which, from the easy transit from London, is now brought within a short day's journey.

Miss Sinclair and her pupils walked at first on the broad terrace, before the windows of the palace; they then proceeded up the principal avenue, and stood awhile to admire the large fountain at the end of it. The sun was shining brilliantly on the Place Louis Quinze, which looked almost an entire blaze of gold. And now a little *troupe* of French girls came running down in their joyous and national hilarity, full of a game of *cache, cache*—our hide and seek.

"Oh, how I should like to join them," said Marian and Edith, as the merry band passed by.

This wish, which perhaps had been conveyed in the expression of their faces as the children ran by, seemed almost to have been overheard, as well as observed, by some of them; for with a grace and *naïveté* peculiar to French children, the one who appeared to be the leader of the little party, and whose age might be about ten years, suddenly turned round, and coming up to Edith and Marian with the pure,

sonorous, Parisian accent, inquired "*Si ces demoiselles voudroient bien faire parti avec elles?*"

Miss Sinclair saw no reason to refuse her pupils joining them, particularly as they were accompanied by a person of very lady-like appearance. Marian and Edith were delighted with this permission; but Anne, as usual, preferred remaining with her governess.

They followed the merry children to the *bien renommé Petit Province*, the *quartier* of all the *bonnes* and children; and whilst they watched them as they played, Miss Sinclair and Anne took a seat. Their attention was presently diverted towards two gentlemen, who, after they had taken two or three turns before them in this sunny and sheltered spot (greatly to the annoyance of the little people, whose games they were perpetually interrupting, as they passed and repassed), at length betook themselves to a part of the very seat on which Anne and Miss Sinclair had placed themselves. The eldest of the two, it was evident, from the style of his dress, was a Priest, and about fifty years of age. The other, a very young man, not more than twenty, if that; and apparently, Miss Sinclair thought, in very delicate health. Although they conversed in French, she could easily discern that the younger was an Englishman. The elder was insisting—the young man remonstrating. There was something in the tone of his voice so mild and yielding, and, at the same time, his appearance so interesting, Miss Sinclair felt herself insensibly attracted towards him. They were so deeply engrossed

with their own subject of conversation, she was enabled to observe, and even to overhear them, very distinctly, without drawing upon herself any attention.

"And you think, Father, on the whole, it will be better for *you*, then, to write to my poor mother?"

"Yes, my son, very decidedly so; our holy religion calls for (I disguise it not) self-denial of no common nature—but it ever rewards those who, in humility, distrusting themselves, submit to the guidance of those placed over them by our Holy Church. Your respected mother—it will be better she should hear, by my own pen, of your health and safety, my son. It will be wiser you should wait to write till we arrive at our destination. She is yet weak in our holy faith, and requires," wilily continued the Priest, "that faith strengthened."

"But my sister, Lucy? she is yet to be gained to our cause; my first letter must be to her, then," and Cecil—for it was no other than Cecil Craven—looked, with his honest and open countenance, full into that of his spiritual adviser.

The priest was baffled. Lucy Craven's influence was, if any, the one he had most cause to dread; for she had an immense hold of her brother's heart. To deny or hinder intercourse with her, and at so early a period too, it would be to outstep the boundaries of wisdom. When is a Jesuit ever at a loss? With the crafty subtilty, which so completely forms the foundation of the education of the followers of Loyola, in less than a moment Father Giacomo's part was taken.

(What was easier than to intercept the letters from him to her, or hers to him?)

"By all means, my son; it will be a worthy act to endeavour to gain Miss Craven from her heretical opinions to our holy faith; write by all means to her."

"And when do you propose we should leave Paris?" enquired the young man, with a tone of langour and indifference, very inconsistent with his age, but which bespoke the disease so plainly indicated in his countenance.

"I shall only wait to hear from Brother Anselmo of our apartments having been taken for us at Florence, to move, I think, my son; but you look tired—we will return home," said Father Giacomo, who now, for the first time, perceived Miss Sinclair's eyes fastened on them with an attention he did not quite approve.

Cecil rose mechanically as he spoke, and involuntarily sighed.

"Poor young man," thought Miss Sinclair, as she watched them walk slowly away; "there is some painfully interesting story there, I'm sure."

"That young man appears very ill, does he not?" observed Anne; "and what a very disagreeable expression the Priest had—did you notice his countenance?"

"I did my love," replied her governess. "Oh, what cause for thankfulness we have, Anne, that in our land truth is so widely spread, that—as the Word of God has it—'He who runs may read;' whilst, in this country, darkness pervades both the higher and

the lower class, and their priests keep them in this darkness. That poor young man appears to me to be an English convert to the Church of Rome, from what I could overhear, at least; he seems on the verge of the grave, and has, perhaps, forsaken the faith of Jesus. Oh, how we should prize the privileges we enjoy!"

Here a glance at her watch told Miss Sinclair that it was time for their return home; and, calling Marian and Edith, who had by this time become great friends with their little French acquaintances, they made their way towards the Rue de Rivoli and their hotel. On entering their apartments they were met by Graham, Lady Fitzwilliam's starch maid, who informed them, with her usual stately reserve, that her mistress was too fatigued to see the young ladies, but would do so in the evening.

CHAPTER XX.

"Midst pleasures and palaces
Though we may roam,
Be it ever so humble,
There's no place like home,
Sweet home."

It was now the month of April, and we find Emmeline Vivian in the attainment of her long cherished hopes and desire—that of being at length mistress of Everton, and residing permanently with her dear father; and if she felt an indefinable feeling of happiness in the joyous return, at seventeen years of age, to her revered parent's house, Sir Hugh, on his part, rejoiced in the restoration of his only daughter, for whose advantage he had denied himself the gratification of having had her always with him during her early years, excepting, as we have seen at specified seasons. He had buried his affections with his wife—Emmeline's mother; and, unlike many other men, he had abandoned all thoughts of a second marriage. Disliking equally the idea of governesses at home, Sir Hugh had resigned her education to his sister-in-law, Lady Vansittart's care; a woman, who, without possessing all the

amiable and sweet qualities which so distinguished her sister, the late Lady Vivian, he considered well calculated for the charge he confided to her. We are, however, short-sighted creatures; and perhaps Sir Hugh had never made a greater mistake than that of leaving the little Emmeline under this aunt's care at so early an age as ten years. Lady Vansittart was, in the eyes of the world, an excellent woman; by those who knew her intimately, also, she was considered quite as good as most people; many a virtue was imputed to her, which, in truth, she did not possess. She had lost her husband at an early period of her married life; and she was left a widow with one only son, whose education, until the age of twelve years, she undertook herself, and for which she was considered a very model by her friends. But life is made up of mistakes. *No* one, in truth, *was* so ill calculated to educate a boy like Stuart Vansittart as was his mother. Vain of her own intellectual powers (for she was a very clever woman), she early crammed little Stuart's head with knowledge which was never but half acquired. He was far too indolent to give himself trouble on any subject; but he would, with a *jeu d'esprit* natural to him, catch up readily what he knew would draw forth the applause of his mother's friends, and satisfy her; and Lady Vansittart, too constantly in the habit of hearing what a darling boy hers was—*so* witty! *so* clever! *so* intelligent! was *ebloüéd* with the immense credit he did her. But for herself, she was

unfortunately (as his mother), far too great a cypher with him. She would reason often all this with herself, alone; before others, she could with great difficulty, conceal her annoyance at his determination, too frequently manifested, of carrying his own point, and laughing at her control. She would say "it was only the natural independence of a boy—it was manly." But he could so quickly (cunningly more properly be said), knowing his mother's weakness, turn her remonstrance upon herself with "But, my dear mother, *you* have always yourself taught me to despise being like a silly girl, in leading strings." Very handsome, Lady Vansittart was too proud of her son ever to allow him, to *others*, to be in the wrong. So at thirteen years of age, when his Uncle Hugh declared the boy would be ruined if he was not sent from home, to lose some of his vanity and conceit, did Stuart Vansittart become a very torment to the whole of the family; but, above all, to his cousin Emmeline, who had ever to bear unmurmuringly his caprice and ill-humour; for if she ever appealed to her aunt on his account, *she* was sure to be made out always in the wrong. Stuart could never be so. Left to a governess and masters —Lady Vansittart's whole attention being given to her son—Emmeline grew up as most girls do, who, having lost their mother in infancy, find few in this cold and heartless world to supply their loss. She could hardly be said to love her Aunt, and yet she bore her as much affection as a character can do,

much injured from want of development, and a heart rendered apparently cold and apathetic, from the want of some object, either to call forth its warmer impulses, or to bestow on it the affectionate attention which calls forth feelings of gratitude. Her want of beauty had always been a cause of disappointment to Lady Vansittart; but as far as an every-day care of her niece went, she was wanting in nothing towards her. Emmeline had the first masters; her aunt paid great attention to her manners, &c., and would often moralize at a considerable length with her, on her responsibilities, as she grew older, in the prospect before her of keeping her father's house. Emmeline would listen attentively to all her aunt said. This was truly the bright prospect of her young life; the thought of it would often bring a bright colour on her usually pale cheek—for she was by no means a girl deficient in good feeling. She loved her father as the being who had, in her short glimpses of him, appeared to elevate her to a position she had nowhere else. Whilst a nobody in her Aunt's house, at Everton she was Sir Hugh's daughter; and who amongst us does not value the just recognition of our own rights? As for her brother she loved him as a superior being; but there was a strange feeling of pride mixed up with her affection for Allyne. Conscious of her own want of personal attractions, she gloried in the admiration he everywhere excited; and, contrasted with Stuart, her cousin Stuart, how did he not shine? Allyne,

so generous in every thought, so unselfish too—whilst Stuart was so mean, so cowardly, and so disliked by everybody. No wonder that Emmeline had cause for rejoicing when the last few months of her residence with Lady Vansittart were terminated. And though these last few months, from Stuart's being from home, she was more than usual an object with her aunt, she ill-disguised the truth that she left her with little or no regret, when the long-wished-for summons to Everton arrived.

And now we see Emmeline installed in all her new duties and privileges. There was nothing her kind, excellent father had not thought of for her gratification. He had purchased for her one of Broadwood's most expensive pianos, and had her own sitting-room entirely newly fitted up.

"I must only depute *you now*, Emmy, my love, as my chaplain, night and morning," said Sir Hugh, as the first evening of her arrival closed in; and, at the usual hour of prayer, he handed her the Bible. "My eyes," he said, "grow very, very weak; and you will always read for me."

Emmeline found a very great pleasure in the society of her amiable aunt at Summerfield, with whom she more or less passed chiefly her mornings, and with her cousin Louisa. She joined very readily in their admirable way of assisting and relieving the wants of the poor around them.

Mrs. Vivian was ever mindful to impress gently upon Emmeline's mind that God assigns weighty

responsibilities to the different stations he calls us to fill—that hers would be a sphere of extensive usefulness; Everton having been so long without a mistress, she would have greatly need to pray to have a right judgment in all things; that her life should not be that of selfish indulgence in the many comforts God had so largely lavished upon her, regardless of the numberless calls she would have from every side upon her benevolence and charity; and, to these excellent admonitions, Mrs. Vivian endeavoured also to show her consistently, *how* she might permanently benefit those who would naturally look up to her for help and assistance.

"I am not surprised, my dear Emmeline," said Mrs. Vivian to her niece one morning (after Emmeline had been detailing to her the numerous petitions she had already received for this and that want, from this and that cottage), "that you are so regularly besieged; you must use great discretion, however, and, as I before said, much prayer for direction, that your power of doing good may not be that of indiscriminate almsgiving—which I call squandering money to save further trouble."

"You have been so useful, my dear aunt," returned Emmeline, "and know so well all the Everton poor people, I shall always have recourse to you in any dilemma I may find myself."

Emmeline had been now two months at home; it was her practice to devote herself, every afternoon, to her father, either in riding or driving with him;

but the weather had been wet for many successive days, and there had been no going out.

One day, towards the afternoon, the sky clearing, and there appeared some promise of a cessation of the hitherto incessant pour, Sir Hugh proposed to Emmeline that, as the ground was too damp to make walking pleasant, that they should take a ride.

"By all means, dear papa, said Emmeline, laying down a book she was reading, "by all means;" and she flew to prepare herself.

"How very melancholy the Abbey looks, now the Fitzwilliams are away!" observed Emmeline, as they passed the beautiful old place. "I was quite surprised to hear from Louisa they were all on the continent; and Mr. Priestly, papa, what was it aunt Louisa was saying the other day about his being absent—who, then, does his duty at Nutleigh?"

"He has now two curates, my dear Emmeline, who very fully supply his place. Aunt Louisa said right, he is absent; they do not exceed their Rector in absurdities, but they follow exactly in his footsteps. But where *do* you think Eustace Priestly is, just now, Emmeline? Guess, and you will be more than ever astonished!"

"How could I guess, dear papa," returned his daughter, laughing, "unless he is half way to Rome?"

"No, not at Rome, but at Alton Towers, on a visit to Lord Hetherington; he took an immense fancy to him this autumn in town; and one day that

Eustace Priestly was paying them a visit, they invited him to the country the first leisure he had."

"Is this possible?" exclaimed Emmeline.

She might have said more, for her thoughts suggested a thousand things, but she forbore. She feared unintentionally to betray her cousin Ethell, and this would not have been fair. The clouds now were looking very heavy, and appeared to threaten a recommencement of rain. Sir Hugh proposed they should turn their horses heads homewards, which they had hardly done when the rain began to fall; and though Emmeline urged her beautiful horse, Fairy, to its utmost speed, before they could reach Everton they were regularly wet through.

"Change your clothes immediately, my dear child," said her father, as he lifted her, literally dripping, from off her horse; and Emmeline, affectionately reassuring him, ran lightly up the steps to obey his wishes.

CHAPTER XX.

THERE is something peculiarly impressive in death, at all times, at every age; to see the object we have loved and admired gone from us! the voice that cheered us, now silent for ever! To see the loved, but *now* lifeless form, and know that we must not, cannot keep it! that it *must* go, and be hid from us, and return to dust, till the voice of the great Creator bids it again arise! All this is very awakening, inexpressively solemn! But, perhaps, of all kinds, the most affecting as well as appalling, is sudden death! By this we would say, unprepared death. Well does our beautiful Liturgy pray earnestly against this. The object who, but a few days before, perhaps but yesterday, the very life of our life, the only link, it may be, that bound us to earth, snatched away, with the bloom of health and vigour on the cheek, the future as clear, and apparently as secure, to them as our own! Who could be insensible to the voice of God, mysteriously speaking to us in this His peculiar dispensation? But what is it that *can* bring comfort under such affliction to the survivors? It is faith! faith in Him! faith in Jesus Christ! To the mourner whom

the blow has bowed to the very ground with its deep, deep grief! it is the knowledge, the certainty, that all is well. It has been the hand of love that has smitten—it is the hand of love that will sustain. This is the solace—the *only* solace—to the believing Christian. Sir Hugh Vivian had taken cold the day of the ride with his daughter, when they were overtaken with such rain. Careful that *she* should change immediately her wet things, he had forgotten to use the same wise precaution himself. A cold, which had for some little time hung on him, became seriously increased; two days kept him a prisoner to his own room; and, on the third, in great alarm, without contemplating any serious danger, Emmeline despatched a messenger to Newbury, for her father's medical attendant, Dr. S.

It was late when the servant reached his house, but he lost not a moment in obeying Miss Vivian's summons. However, when he reached Everton the fiat had gone forth; he only saw poor Sir Hugh to pronounce that he had but few hours to live! Rapid prostration had followed the progress of disease, which neither medical aid nor the utmost care could avert. And now, this agonizing intelligence was to be conveyed to his daughter, poor Emmeline.

Sir Hugh expressed immediately his wish that his sister-in-law, Mrs. Vivian, should be sent for, and his son Allyne, from Eton.

"Go, my dear, dear child," he said, as he loosed

hold of Emmeline's hand, "write a few lines to my dear boy, to Allyne—to his master, I should say."

Emmeline raised her head, which (in her uncontrollable grief on the announcement to her that her father could not live) she had buried in the bed, and prepared to obey his request. She descended to the drawing-room, which so recently had been the happy scene of every day's domestic enjoyment, and seated herself at her writing-table, the gift of her dear father. She took the paper, the pen, her ruby pen (again another of his own gifts), she essayed to write, but tears blinded her eyes—everything seemed to float before her—it *was* impossible! She hid her face in her hands, and gave vent to her utter misery. For some few minutes poor Emmeline found it wholly beyond her to restrain her feelings. But then, the bitter thought, that every moment she delayed was only prolonging her absence from her beloved parent, she again resumed her pen.

"Come, dear Allyne, come immediately," she said, "or I fear you can never see our dear, dear father again, alive!"

This was all she found herself able to write. Dr. S. would finish it; *he* would convey the mournful intelligence to her dear brother's tutor; *that* she might leave to *him*—and the sorrowing girl rose from the sad effort she had been making, to give directions for the messenger to be sent forthwith. At the same moment her aunt Louisa was announced. Poor Emmeline flew into Mrs.

Vivian's arms, speechless! Grief such as hers could find no power of utterance. Mrs. Vivian's was a heart capable of the tenderest sympathy; she had gone through all the anguish of parting with the dearest objects of her existence, and she could feel with, and *for*, her afflicted niece.

"My poor Emmeline!" she began, "this is, indeed, affliction! we must commit *it*, with all its attendant distress and anxiety, to *Him* who has told us to call on Him in the day of trouble—we must trust where we cannot see, my dear girl."

"Papa would like to see you immediately," at length she said; "he has been anxiously enquiring for you. Dr. S. is with him. I have been endeavouring to write to Allyne," she continued, whilst the tears rolled fast down her cheeks, "but I could not finish. . . . . But, come to my dear father."

So saying, they ascended to Sir Hugh's room, where they found him much in the same state as when Emmeline left him.

"Louisa," said Sir Hugh, as he perceived his sister approaching, "I thank you for so immediately attending my summons. You have come to pay me a farewell visit; I wished to see you! It is at this, my closing scene, that I most feel the value of all your exertions for my spiritual welfare; and it is only due to you to tell you, that your good endeavours have been blessed to me. Yes, my dear sister! I would ask you to do *by* my poor children

as you *have* done by me. Be the Christian friend to Allyne that his father ever found in you himself. And for Emmy! poor Emmy! I need not ask what I know you have already given her, your affection. She is young, and needs advice."

He would have continued, but the doctor interposed, interdicting further conversation, and prescribing the strictest quiet, as Sir Hugh was much exhausted. He then took his leave, promising to be very early with him in the morning, and left Mrs. Vivian to comfort poor Emmeline, in the prospect of her approaching affliction. Fervently, as she knelt with her aunt in prayer that evening, did she commend herself to her heavenly Father, and pray for submission to His will.

Morning brought with it no amendment; and if Emmeline (as we are all so apt to do) had indulged a hope (when, with her aunt's hand in hers, she yielded to her persuasion to take a little rest on the sofa, in the room adjoining her father's bed-room) that the deep sleep into which he had fallen, after the doctor's departure, might effect some happy change, it entirely died within her when she beheld him again. A glance, even to one so inexperienced as poor Emmeline, one glance was enough to show her that death was on his brow—death was fast claiming his victim.

"Has Mr. Graham, my good friend Mr. Graham, been told that I should like to see him, my dear Emmy?" said Sir Hugh, as his child bent over

him, to catch the articulation, which was becoming gradually fainter and fainter.

"Aunt Louisa has sent for him, my dearest father," Emmeline replied, tears choking her words.

"Nay, Emmy," said he, "grieve not thus, my child; this parting, you know, must have been, sooner or later; it must come. The all-wise Disposer of all events has seen fit to call me sooner than we had thought, either of us. His will be done! To my Saviour be the praise that I am ready to depart. Read, my child, read some portion of God's Word; it is the comfort a sinner, like myself, finds in a moment like this. It is *that* Word, Emmy, that brings peace at the last."

She essayed to read, but her emotion was too great. She vainly tried to proceed, but was obliged to hand the Bible to her aunt, who was likewise much affected. Before she had concluded the portion selected, the door gently opened, and Mr. Graham entered, with poor Allyne, who he had fetched from Eton, on hearing of the alarming illness of his father. Sir Hugh had dozed a little, and his eyes were closed; but he roused as they entered, and, extending a hand to both, looked what he *could* not utter. At length,

"Allyne," he said, turning his eyes with the deepest affection upon his son, whose profound grief betrayed itself in no other way but by the ashy paleness of his countenance, "Allyne, my boy, you

have come to see me die, but, I trust, the death of the righteous—in the all-sufficient righteousness of Him who died to save. And you, my good friend, have not been wanting," and poor Sir Hugh glanced with kindness on Mr. Graham, "in proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation, the message of peace to fallen man, from your pulpit. It is a matter of much satisfaction to me that I placed you where I leave you. I used to think my dear brother too extreme in his views. But, oh, not *now!* Continue to preach Christ—preach Him faithfully! And, Allyne, Allyne, think of your father's dying testimony, his dying request, that you will study your Bible; and" . . . . (both Allyne and his sister had sunk down upon their knees, close to their father's bed) "take care, cherish your sister, my poor Emmeline!"

These last words died upon his lips. He was sinking very fast. Mr. Graham motioned the sorrowing party to prayer.

"Your testimony, my dear Sir Hugh, is a sweet one—to the Lord Jesus be the praise! To us remains the joyful assurance that you die in Him, who, as you testify, is all-sufficient to save. To Him do I now commend you and ourselves."

And so saying, the pious servant of God knelt down, praying fervently for him who was now leaving his sorrowing children, and for those who, in agony, watched his departure. Their sobs alone interrupted the solemn silence that reigned. Dr. S. now entered

unperceived, and stood for a moment in deep contemplation.

The prayer ended, he advanced to the bedside of his patient, who appeared to have fallen into a state of unconsciousness. Sir Hugh once more opened his eyes, and, with a look of the most intense affection at both his children, lifting up his eyes again, as if commending them to Him before whom he was about to appear, closed them with a gentle sigh—for ever!

It was with difficulty Emmeline was removed away from her father's remains; she could not persuade herself that he was, indeed, gone. Both her brother and herself were stupified by the sudden blow. Their Aunt Vivian's affection, however, was a powerful solace to them in this their heart-rending bereavement.

As soon as the last sad offices were paid, and Sir Hugh's remains were consigned to their last home, the brother and sister took up their temporary abode at Summerfield, until their first distress of grief had somewhat subsided. Lady Vansittart lost no time in pressing her niece to return to her, and reside as formerly with her, until Allyne should attain his majority, and permit of her living with him at Everton.

Poor Emmeline! how short-lived had been her sunshine! for the short time she had passed with her father had, indeed, been perfectly such. And all was changed! Life appeared one dreary,

solitary blank; for religion, as yet, had brought with it no experimental comfort to her young heart. The knowledge of the truth she had received; but God's sanctifying grace, the gift of God's Holy Spirit, applying healing and consolation under his chastening hand, was yet a stranger to her; and though Allyne, as they travelled part of the way together, on his way back to Eton, and she herself to her aunt, in London, endeavoured to comfort her, bidding her "Cheer up," saying, "the time will soon pass, and, in a very few years, you will come and keep my house at Everton for me," and with his brightest smile thus tried to distract her from her present sorrow, Emmeline could not dissimulate all the grief and wretchedness she felt.

Her brother felt his loss keenly; but he was younger, he was admired by the world, he had fortune, he was *now* Sir Allyne Vivian! whilst she had lost the parent that loved, and was all in all to her. None could fully understand Emmeline's desolation of heart.

There were two announcements in the *Morning Post*, of the 20th June, but very different in their nature. "Approaching marriage in high life," headed the first: "We are authorised to state, that a marriage is on the *tapis* between the eldest and lovely daughter of the Earl and Countess of Hetherington, the Lady Ethell Forster, and the Rev. Eustace Priestly, of the Priory, Nutleigh, Berkshire." Whilst beneath, amongst the deaths recorded

of the same date, was that of, "At Everton, on Thursday the 20th, suddenly, after a few days' illness, deservedly regretted by all who knew him, Sir Hugh Vivian, Bart., in his 68th year."

And thus did the bright sunshine of a happy future dawn on one cousin, whilst dark and heavy clouds of affliction bowed the other to the very ground.

CHAPTER XXII.

> "A feigned religion, that, with fitting art,
> Infernally for each expression finds
> Some flattering counterpart, or creed,
> Or charm, 'tis man's religion!" ANON.

"I MUST speak to my mother to-morrow—but, no! —my father will be the best. My poor, poor mother! she is suffering cruelly! and yet bears on as if our heavenly Father required of us such torturing of the frail body. This silence, however, must not continue."

So mused Lucy Craven, as she sat at a small table, as was her wont, to read her Bible before she retired to rest. She had dismissed her maid for the night, but continued plunged in the most painful reverie. More than three weeks, nearly a month, had elapsed, and no news had reached Woodfield of either Father Giacomo or Cecil, save through intelligence conveyed in a visit Mrs. Craven had received from a brother priest of Father Giacomo's, at Stoneyhurst. There was something strange in this mysterious visit, which at once puzzled and alarmed Lucy. Her brother had written, the first three or four months of their separation, regularly enough, and

these accounts had been cheering. Father Giacomo had done so too, and they had had no ground of complaint; but now, six months had passed away since Cecil left Woodville; the last three weeks no letter came. Lucy had observed, too, since the visit of the priest to her mother, with all Mrs. Craven's endeavours (and these were powerful ones), to conceal and master what was passing within. She had been often visibly agitated; that very evening she had surprised her in tears.

"There must be something the matter. I can bear the agonizing suspense no longer," continued Lucy to herself. "How strange it is; I wrote last to my dear, dear brother, but I will, I must, ask my father's attention to my anxiety to morrow; and now I will to prayer. Who ever sought the throne of grace, in a moment of trouble, in vain? Poor, misguided victims of Papacy! Torture your bodies, rack your minds, punish yourselves to the utmost!—nature is nature still, and requires the grace that is from above to enable it to bear aught that is contrary to self. He that bare our sins has promised alone to carry our sorrows;" and, so saying, after having knelt down, and asked for strength under this her deep anxiety, and for relief in her present suspense, Lucy Craven sought her pillow.

Insensibly, Lucy found herself, on the following morning, hovering continually about her mother's room. She was in the habit of filling a small balcony (into which Mrs. Craven's dressing-room

window opened) with her mother's favourite flowers. Restless, from a feeling she could not account for to herself that morning, she continued unusually long arranging and re-arranging the pots of violets she had had conveyed there. About, at length, however, to leave the room, which communicated by a door at the furthest end with her mother's bedroom and sitting-room, her attention was, for an instant, arrested by the sound of voices. A moment more, and she was convinced it was her mother's, speaking in its usual subdued tones; but the other—whose could that be? And yet it was a man she now heard, and not her father. She advanced to the door, as if to open it and enter, and only hesitated on distinctly hearing her mother, in almost heart-rending accents, thus:—

"Let me only know where he is, Father—my dear, dear son! I will conform to any requirements—I will endeavour to stifle my anxiety—but his address, let *me*, his mother, have that. You have told me he is ill. Let me write—*only this*—accord me this."

A harder heart than the priest before her (for it was no other than one of the Jesuit brotherhood at Stoneyhurst that stood in conference with the unhappy mother) might have been melted at the tone with which these last words were uttered. Not so our Jesuit. Too well accustomed to deal with the human heart unmoved—to witness many a sorrow created by such intelligence as he was the mes-

senger of, it was not likely poor Mrs. Craven's distress would have much effect on him.

"It is painful to me, in the extreme, daughter, to have simply to execute the orders entrusted to me, but so it is. Brother Giacomo transmitted to the Superior of our Order the news of your son's illness, to be conveyed without loss of time by me to yourself—but to *yourself* alone. Any sudden communication from his family, betraying alarm, might be of the utmost consequence to your son, producing dangerous results. Brother Giacomo never leaves him, night or day; and his resignation and composure to the Supreme Will he mentions as very edifying to behold. You will probably hear from Brother Giacomo in a day or so; until then, our holy faith must be your support, daughter. In extreme danger, Mr. Craven would be made acquainted with his son's state. In the present stage, consideration for yourself *alone* has prompted our brother sending through me the intelligence I have conveyed. It is furthermore necessary that until you hear again, no communication, on your part, should be made to the members of your family who are not of our Holy Church. My commission is over, daughter, with your permission, and I will now retire."

Lucy trembled with agitation at all she had heard. Her worst fears were, then, correct—for, oh! she had *had* them. Her heart had misgiven her—her hand was on the door to enter; but again her mother's voice prevented her.

"Stay, Father, stay; you cannot, must not, leave me THUS. If your orders were to acquaint me with my son's illness, the law of nature forbids it. Oh! you could not be desired to leave me thus ignorant of *where he is*—where a letter, a letter from his mother, will find him. I will not breathe a word of his illness to one of my family. I will keep my sorrow, my grief, my anxiety, all within my unhappy heart; but refuse not, Father, to give me the address—my son's address."

Lucy listened with indignation; that her mother should thus supplicate where she had a right to demand—it was insupportable. What a religion! thought she, that countenances such iniquitous proceedings. But she now understood the whole, and felt thankful (fully understanding her beloved brother's danger) that she had been restrained from her desire to enter at once, and ask an explanation. All, she felt, now depended upon the utmost caution; and anxiously she waited the reply to her mother's appeal.

"My daughter, time presses," returned the wily Father; I have executed my mission, and must depart. But before I do so, to show you how lenient and compassionate the Church ever is to its meek and humble followers, if you will solemnly promise in no way to reveal your son's present residence, I am permitted, on receiving this assurance from yourself, to make it known to you, but you *alone*."

"You have it Father; I repeat again, no earthly

being shall know anything but myself; only let me have this address. I will depend entirely on Father Giacomo's acquainting Mr. Craven, should our dear son grow worse; only let *me*, his mother, have the power of writing immediately to him."

"It is, then," said the Priest, and he handed (Lucy thought she could distinguish as if it was paper) Mrs. Craven something from his pocket.

She caught the sound as of Rome; but the few words that were now spoken were too low for her to be able to hear them; and hardly a minute had elapsed before the door of the room adjoining shut, as if the last speaker had withdrawn. Hastily she now moved from the spot to which, during the preceding conversation, she had stood transfixed. There was a small staircase, that communicated with the hall, from her mother's *suite* of apartments; she glided swiftly along the corridor of the small gallery, and gained the top of the staircase alluded to. She was satisfied, in her own mind, that the visitor of the last week, to her mother, was the same of to-day; and, determined to put this beyond a doubt, she thus had been favoured with the desired opportunity of verifying her suspicions. Yes, it *was* the same, taking his departure.

Lucy hurried back to her mother's apartment, which she now entered; but Mrs. Craven was not there. Puzzled as to where her mother could have retired to, and at a loss, for a moment, how to act, with so much of importance pressing itself upon her

mind, she sat down, resolving to await her return. As her eyes wandered listlessly around the room, her eye glanced on a small piece of paper which lay upon the floor, and, stooping to pick it up, she found it to be the very address at Rome which the priest had given her mother, under the promise of so much secrecy. She quickly seized the opportunity thus given her of transcribing this direction, with her pencil, in her pocket-book. She could not but regard it as a most providential occurrence, as she felt sure her mother must have dropped it by accident. Lucy had hardly done so, and replaced the paper on the table, before Mrs. Craven re-entered, looking more pale and haggard than usual. Had her daughter not been aware of all that had passed, she might have felt alarm at the evident marks of illness shown in her mother's countenance; but, after such a conference, how could she look otherwise?

"Mother, my dear mother," said Lucy affectionately advancing to meet her, "I have overheard all, unintentionally, but providentially; I was in your dressing-room during that person's visit who has but just left you—I have heard all!—my dearest brother's illness, and the prohibition given you to allow any of us, even my father, to be made acquainted with it, on pain of refusing *you* —our dear, dear Cecil, your own son's direction! Oh, mother, can this be religion that inflicts such cruelties—breaking natural confidence, severing ties

which the gracious God has given to us to be our mutual comfort and support ?"

Mrs. Craven cast such an imploring and beseeching look on her daughter, as she sank with extreme emotion into the first chair that offered, that the latter hesitated a moment to proceed. It was, however, but for a moment; her alarm for her mother overbalanced every other consideration, and she continued—

"Dear mother, you must make allowance for me, if I seem to forget the respect and affection I must ever have for you; but this is no moment for hesitation. Cecil is ill—and worse, mother, he is in the hands of those ——"

"Stop, Lucy, stop," said Mrs. Craven, "you will break my heart."

"My dear mother, I will do all I can to comfort you under our mutual anxiety; but *you*, you must act. Acquaint my father of Cecil's danger without delay, or let me do so at once. In a strange land, away from us all—shall strange faces alone surround his suffering couch? Let your feelings speak, mother. Oh, leave him not to die thus!"

These last words appeared to arouse Mrs. Craven.

"Die! die! oh, no! Lucy, speak not thus—but my promise! He said—he said Father Giacomo would write, if necessary; I was to wait for that," and, with a bewildered look, the mother sought her daughter's countenance.

"Trust them not, mother, my dear mother; my

beloved brother must not perish thus; I have taken the address—only tell me it is the right one," and she held the paper to her mother; "on me be the blame; I picked the paper up. *You* have said nothing; I have done it, and I want you only to confirm it. I will find my father at once, and, if he will allow me, I will be his companion to Rome. We will see Cecil; the sight of those he loves may yet revive him."

While she said it, her heart died within her, for her forebodings were of the worst kind. Mrs. Craven glanced her eye almost vacantly at the piece of paper Lucy held to her view—distractedly nodded an affirmative to the question her daughter's look implied.

"You are ill, mother; I will ring for your maid, whilst I seek my father; there is no time to be lost," so saying, Lucy left the room.

Mr. Craven was in his study, where his daughter surprised him. He was deeply astonished at her communication, but the great influence she habitually possessed over him, after a lengthened conversation, in which a certain misgiving about his son arose in his mind (very far, however, from the truth in all its enormity), he determined to set off immediately, according to the address Lucy had so fortunately obtained. With much persuasion on his child's part, he at length yielded to her extreme desire that she should be allowed to accompany him. The result of their journey we shall know later.

The news of her son's illness had been so severe a shock, with all the exciting scene which had passed with the Stoneyhurst Priest in the morning, that on Lucy's return to Mrs. Craven, to convey the issue of her conversation with her father, she found that she had been obliged to go to her bed, worn with exhaustion of mind and body. She gently and affectionately broke the intelligence to her of her immediate departure with her father ; and, though great was her distress to leave Mrs. Craven in this very sad condition, the case was urgent—the necessity imperative. Commending her to God, and assuring her she should have all her disquietude for her dear brother speedily relieved, by the earliest intelligence, with *every* particular, immediately she reached Rome, Lucy left her to make the necessary preparations for her long journey.

CHAPTER XXIII.

NEAR a window which opened deliciously in the Italian fashion on a spacious terrace, shaded with the most luxurious orange and myrtle trees; whilst, in the distance, the eye glanced over a large *parterre*, studded with the choicest shrubs and flowers, and reclining on a sofa, we find Cecil Craven, inhaling the delicious fragrance which the balmy air conveyed.

Five months have passed away since we left him and Father Giacomo in Paris, on their way to Italy. He had rallied immensely on their first arrival in the sunny South, but subsequently, the month he passed at Florence, he lost ground; and an incessant restlessness, and desire to be moving, induced him to yield very readily to Father Giacomo's proposal, that they should go on to Rome. To those around him it became very evident, since his arrival at the "Eternal City," that his days, poor fellow, were numbered.

He had not been more than ten days in this interesting capital before his increasing weakness became alarmingly visible, and to whisper silently to

himself that his dissolution could not be very far distant. He had more than once expressed to Father Giacomo fears about himself, and, without wishing to alarm his family, his desire that they should be made aware of his failing state. The subtle Priest allowed him to believe that this had been done; and it had not a little tended to increase poor Cecil's depression —his receiving no tidings from Woodfield. On the morning of which we are speaking, he seemed so utterly exhausted, and unable for any exertion, that Father Giacomo had been induced to convey the intelligence, as we have seen, through the Jesuit brotherhood at Stoneyhurst, to Mrs. Craven; but he had nevertheless deemed it, he said, advisable for the family to wait further news.

"I wonder," began the poor invalid, after a very long silence on the part of the Father, who had been engaged very busily in writing, "that we have not heard from Woodfield—it is so unlike Lucy, leaving me so long without a line."

"I did not wish," returned the Priest, "to agitate you, my dear son; you must forgive my little concealment; I had, a few days since, a letter for you, enclosed in one to me, from your respected mother; you have been too suffering for me to give it to you; but as you appear so anxious for news, I will not keep it any longer from you;—here it is," and Father Giacomo handed him a letter, which Cecil eagerly seized.

"You will observe," continued the Priest, "that

your mother has been ill," whilst he watched the anxious countenance of his pupil during the perusal of the letter; "Miss Craven is from home."

For some moments Cecil was silent; but he handed the letter back, and, taking up a book, appeared to read; his thoughts, however, were far, far away; they were at home with his mother and Lucy—the gentle companion of his youth—the one of all others that held the most prominent place in his heart. Poor young man! the near prospect of death which would force itself upon him, in spite of all Father Giacomo's assurances, that, as summer drew on, he would be better, a feeling of inward disquiet, which he could not distinctly analyse, now took possession of his mind. What if, really, his days *were* passing away? if he should shortly die? on what were his hopes for eternity founded? He had, until his arrival in Rome, constantly attended Mass, and lived a strict Roman Catholic. He was truly attached to his tutor—the wily Priest; yet there were moments of late, when a something of doubt would arise, as to the power and sufficiency of the religion he professed to save his soul. And these thoughts would press very seriously upon his lonely hours. At first he repressed, as blasphemous, *this temptation*—which he considered it to be—but latterly, the conversation he had had, on leaving Woodfield, with his sister, as well as the recollection of many previous ones, dwelt vividly upon his mind; her earnest request, too, that he would "Search the

Scriptures" for the truth, all forcibly presented itself, and Cecil, on the day we are here speaking of, took from its hiding-place (for he had never allowed Father Giacomo to know of his sister's gift) his little Bible. And now, whenever an opportunity occurred, and that he was alone, the Sacred Volume became his companion. The simple passage in Timothy, "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus," startled him; it was marked by Lucy, and claimed his attention. He wondered it had never struck him before; but then, had he ever read his Bible? How was it, that among the passages with which he was familiar, he had never met with this one—Col. ii., which had also been marked for him by his dear sister—the 22nd and 23rd verses especially?

"One mediator between God and men." Where, then, the necessity of prayers to the saints—to the Virgin? "By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." This of all others—with the one adjoining, "Not of works, lest any man should boast" — attracted seriously his attention.

On the day in question, as he seemed quite unequal to leave his sofa, the Father had left him for a short time, on pressing business, in charge of his servant.

"This, then, is what my sweet sister meant," thought Cecil, "dear, dear Lucy!" as unusually exhausted from the effects of incessant coughing, he

lay surveying the calm, bright view before him—his thoughts divided between home and all its dear objects. This world he felt fast fading from before him, and eternity opening upon an hereafter. Was he not daily assured by his Roman Catholic creed that all was safe and secure to him? but did he feel, himself, this to be the case, in the prospect so near at hand?

"This is what she meant," and the passage lay open before him, and he read and re-read it; "it is by grace, then—salvation is a free gift—'not of works, lest any man should boast;' and do we not, does not the Church of Rome boast of her works? Yes, yes! and has not Lucy constantly said so? Oh! it is a fearful thing if I am wrong! *Now, now* that I know I must die—for I feel that I am dying—it is a fearful thing!"

And the young man covered his eyes, and shuddered involuntarily.

"Oh! if I have been in error all along! My dear mother, too! We shall never meet this side the grave, I am confident. What if we never meet again beyond it! And Lucy, why is she not with me? She would solve my doubts," thought Cecil, "Where is that text she was so fond of bringing before me? the 11th chapter of Luke, I think it was."

And Cecil turned over the pages of his Bible, and found the beautiful invitation to prayer, "Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find." He

closed his eyes, and lay pondering on this word, until roused from his meditation by the entrance of Father Giacomo, who was agreeably surprised to find him so much better than he had ventured to hope. But this change, unhappily, proved to be but very transient. That night, on retiring to rest, he was seized with an unusually violent fit of coughing, in which he burst a blood-vessel; and, upon his medical attendant immediately waiting upon him, he did not hesitate to pronounce the young man to be in imminent danger; that but a very short time could elapse, and he would have terminated his very brief career!

And now the time had arrived for the consummation of the long, deeply-laid plot—the cunningly-devised plan. Could it be possible that the man who had so entwined himself around his pupil's heart, as to have become the ruler of every action, as well, almost, of every thought—could he be contemplating villainy towards one so unsuspecting? Alas! Jesuit principle spares neither old nor young. Feelings must be crushed—hearts broken—ties severed—and wrong made to be right, if the Church of Rome (calling itself the only true Church) may *thereby* be elevated or aggrandized.

In the case before us, Cecil's immense fortune was necessarily to be secured to her interests before his death. To effect this, the Father must obtain Cecil's own disposal (in his own hand-writing too) of all his property. But how was this now, in the poor

young man's dying state, to be achieved? No time, however, was to be lost; and, approaching the bed—

"My son, my dear son," said Father Giacomo, "it becomes my painful duty to prepare you for the change which awaits you. But if, my son, God is calling you thus early away from earth's fading vanities, it is to give you, as one of his dutiful and obedient children, and as a member of *our only* True and Holy Catholic Church, the reward he has promised. You die, my son, in the faith of the only True Church? You need not speak, but sign to me that I am right in saying this."

Cecil opened his eyes, and looked steadfastly at him for a moment. He was unable to speak, but he slightly moved his head, which the Priest, considering as a sign of assent, proceeded—

"I am confident, my son, that, as a member of our most holy Faith, you feel anxious for those of your family, who have not as yet entered the bosom of the Church. You feel desirous, if possible, to induce them to leave their heretical errors, and embrace the only true faith. Miss Craven, your sister, remains in these errors as yet; and you are aware, if she die in them, my son, you can never meet again. Knowing your extreme affection for your unhappy sister, I feel I cannot sufficiently urge you to do all you can, during the short time now allotted to you, to the furtherance of so pious, so laudable, and so acceptable a work! God has (if he

yet permit you to live to your majority, a few days hence) given you large possessions. Let me ask you to bequeath *some* of your earthly stores to the Church—sadly impoverished in these her days of trial and humiliation. To this great and pious end, bequeath, my son, some of your worldly baubles, and thousands will offer up their prayers for those allied to you by consanguinity, and yet enemies to the true faith. These prayers shall yet, believe me, suffice to bring your sister out from her heresy. I have prepared a paper, my son, to which I would ask you to affix your trembling hand, and the blessing of the Church, for time and eternity, will be yours."

In his eagerness to effect what he so anxiously desired, Father Giacomo had not perceived that, during this lengthened speech, Cecil's weakness had increased to an absolute prostration; and on his drawing forth the paper, which he had duly prepared for his pupil's signature, he found that the poor fellow was insensible—that he could not have heard *half* what he had been saying to him; and the wily Priest saw, with deep reluctance, that he must postpone his purpose, until some change for the better, in poor Cecil's state, should admit of it.

CHAPTER XXIV.

"Hark! the warning tone
Deepens—its word is *death*."

MRS. HEMANS.

IT was late at night that a carriage stopped at the gates of the Palazzo Sciarra, Via del Popolo, at Rome, in the splendid apartments of which (*that* part which is usually rented by visitors of distinction) that the young Englishman (as the Italians called poor Cecil Craven), with the Jesuit Priest, resided. A gentleman, somewhat advanced in years, accompanied by a young lady, alighted hastily from it, and rapidly ascended the spacious staircase, where they were met on the landing by no less a person than Father Giacomo himself, who, hearing the sound of strange voices below, came out to enquire the cause.

"I wish to see my son—where is Cecil?" impatiently demanded Mr. Craven; for the stranger was no other than Mr. Craven himself, and his daughter. It was with considerable difficulty, notwithstanding his habitual self-control, that the Priest concealed his embarrassment and surprise, not to say the annoyance, which their sudden and most unexpected appearance occasioned him. However, the

long-acquired habit of restraining his feelings, and the exquisite art of mastering them, enabled him to reply with readiness, and with his wonted composure—

"Your son, Mr. Craven—but pray walk in." And he opened, as he spoke, the door of a spacious apartment, into which Mr. Craven and Lucy entered. "I only despatched yesterday a letter to Woodfield," he continued, "to acquaint you with the alarming change which took place the evening before last, as our dear Cecil was going to bed. He broke a small blood-vessel, and I am deeply grieved to add that he has been sinking very fast ever since. Dr. B., the English physician, has made known to me that the poor fellow cannot live many hours!"

Lucy, during this while, had glided into the adjoining apartment, unperceived by Father Giacomo. On a bed, at the farthest end of the room (the draperies and curtains thrown back, to give as much air as possible to the invalid), lay Cecil Craven. His eyes were closed, and his face of a deathy paleness. Though his poor sister had prepared herself for the worst, she was quite overcome as she gazed upon his pale, emaciated cheek. A cruel pang shot across her heart, and she paused, fearful to awake him. There was such a disturbed and anxious look in her beloved brother's countenance—he was so changed, too! It was true that he had left her delicate, very delicate; but now, everything spoke too clearly the sad, the mournful truth, that he was passing, indeed, away. And was it only the agony of losing him

that solely engaged her present thoughts, and caused the sudden and fervent clasp of her hands, as her eyes continued transfixed upon the dear object before her? No; it *was* anguish, *bitter* anguish, to part with a brother so fondly loved; but it was of his soul that poor Lucy thought—of how his spiritual interests stood at this moment; if in Christ, she knew they should yet meet before the throne of the everlasting God. But, oh! if he had been resting in any works—if he had but received a knowledge of the Saviour only conditionally, it was a thought full of deep, deep interest! Lucy sank upon her knees beside her brother's bed, with difficulty restraining her grief venting itself in tears. She was aroused by the word "Lucy," indistinctly uttered, but plain enough for her to distinguish; and, on raising her head, she perceived that her dear brother had mentioned her name, evidently in his sleep; and she could hardly restrain her desire of imprinting a kiss on the hand, the loved hand, as it lay on the sheet before her. Again her name was pronounced; and now, with a gentle sigh, Cecil opened his eyes. It was then no dream! His dear sister—her he had so often longed to see—she was there, and kneeling by him.

"Dearest Cecil," said Lucy, and a tear fell on the hand she had now seized.

"I suppose it was a dream," faintly answered Cecil, in a low whisper, "but I fancied you were with me—I thought we were altogether at Wood-

field again. Lucy, I have much to say to you—and I cannot say all I wish. The Bible you"—

"But you *will*, presently, dearest, when you are better."

Mr. Craven and the Priest entered before more could be said. The latter approached his bed with noiseless steps.

"My dear son," he began (bending over the bed, and speaking low as he did so), "your father is here. I beg your pardon, Miss Craven," he added (now perceiving her position at his bedside), "I regret to be obliged to interdict any conversation. Dr. B. has forbid the smallest emotion."

Lucy, by a slight inclination of her head, signified that she perfectly understood Father Giacomo, and at the same time remained seated as she was. Mr. Craven was greatly shocked to see his son so near his end. He had never envisaged this melancholy truth, that he was so soon to lose his only son! The blow would be very severe. Silence now prevailed—Father Giacomo only occasionally speaking in a low tone to Mr. Craven, until they separated for the night. Long after they had retired, Lucy stole back again to her brother's room. The Priest occupied the one next to Cecil. Entering very quietly, and gently approaching his bed, to her inexpressible joy she found that her brother was not asleep, though his eyes were closed. As she bent over him, to catch the sound of his breathing, he opened his eyes, and, looking affectionately at her—

"My dear, dear Lucy," said he, in a faint whisper, "I have longed to see you; I have longed to tell you how precious has been your gift! You remember the Bible you gave me."

"Yes, yes," returned his sister; "and you have read it, studied it?"

"Hush!" continued Cecil, putting a finger on his mouth, as a sign that they might be overheard. "Start not, dear sister; my good friend, Father Giacomo, I feel sure, believes himself to be right; but he knows not that *now I see* the truth as it is in Jesus. But *I*, I *have* learnt, I feel I have, I hope I have, from God's Word itself, not by man's teaching, to know that we can only come to God by Jesus. Salvation is of Him and by Him *alone*. But, oh! I have had my doubts, Lucy, and fears, and have often wished for you to talk with me. Now, all I feel is anxiety for my poor mother. And Father Giacomo, he does not know of the change that has taken place in me. *Perhaps* it has been weakness on my part, to have concealed it all from him, but I have had *such* conflicts, *such* distress of mind, on the subject. But, when I am gone, Lucy, give him *yourself* this"—and he took from his pillow a letter—"this will explain all to him; would that it might convince him. And tell my mother, my poor mother, dearest, how, in the prospect of death, I found *alone* comfort in Jesus. Give her, Lucy, my Bible, and beg her, for *my* sake, as my *dying* request, to read it, and pray over it, as *I* have done. Now, *only*, I

feel all is peace! Will you pray with me, read to me, Lucy?"

Cecil had raised himself slightly, whilst speaking to his sister; but now he sank back fatigued; and Lucy, with the deepest emotion, sat down to comply with her beloved brother's request. How her heart rose with gratitude, in the midst of her grief, as she read, according to his request, Rom. viii. 10. Her prayers, then, had been heard for Cecil's soul; and how earnestly, how fervently, had she not besought the throne of grace for him! When was earnest supplication for God's best gifts ever withheld? Then, even in this deep affliction, she could recognize the hand of love and mercy. Lucy continued gently reading until her poor brother's heavy breathing told her he was asleep.

With the same noiseless footsteps with which she entered, after imprinting a gentle kiss upon his forehead, she left the apartment to regain her own, but not to undress, fatigued though she was from the effects of speedy travelling and her long, anxious journey. She preferred stretching herself on her bed, having commissioned her brother's servant (who slept on a small sofa in the adjoining dressing-room) to call her, should she be required, or her brother become in the slightest degree worse.

The morning had just dawned, and the roseate tints of the clouds, separating in varied forms, ushering in the brilliant and glorious sun of an Italian sky, was most strikingly lovely, and at any other

moment Lucy would have risen to watch its unfolding beauties, when a gentle knock at her door made her instantly spring out of bed.

It was her father, who preferred to be the bearer himself of sad and heavy tidings to his dear daughter.

"All is over, Lucy! Dear Cecil expired this morning before even I could reach his apartment. On his servant rising to give him his medicine, he found him, poor fellow, gone!—without a sigh, or even a struggle! I thought, my dear child, you would like to come and see him now. I came, therefore, myself to fetch you."

Tears rolled down poor Lucy's cheeks as she allowed her father to lead her into the still chamber of death, the gentle pressure on his arm alone conveying to him her thanks for this his kind attention. Oh, how peaceful, how inexpressibly peaceful did her poor brother look as Lucy gazed upon her beloved Cecil's now lifeless features—just as she had left him on the previous night! Oh, how unspeakably comforting now were those assurances his own lips had given her of his faith in *his* Saviour and *her* Saviour, as they rose to her mind, assuaging sweetly the severity of the grief which otherwise would have been overwhelming; for nothing could surpass her fond attachment to her brother.

And what, we would ask, were Father Giacomo's feelings as *he* gazed on the face of his pupil, now a lifeless tenement of clay? As much as his stern nature could feel (long accustomed as he was to

curb the smallest approach to any of the tender feelings of the human heart), it might be said that he *was* concerned at Cecil Craven's somewhat sudden removal; but there were other and deeper emotions struggling within the Jesuit's breast as he stood beside the lifeless corpse. Had not his purposes for the aggrandizement of his Church been totally foiled, in the failure of all his preconceived plans, by the acquisition, which he fully assured himself, of all young Craven's property? In all this, to his utter confusion, he was fairly duped and disappointed; and, besides all this, he had certain doubts and misgivings as to his pupil's having died a sincere and genuine Roman Catholic. These reflections greatly disturbed him. To prevent, however, the smallest doubt on this point, he had all the usual ceremonies of his church duly performed in his chamber, with a Mass for the dead; and as interments in Italy, on account of the heat of the climate, are very immediate, the interment was fixed for the following day.

Lucy and her father accordingly obeyed the Father's summons to take a last farewell of their beloved Cecil before he should for ever be hid from their eyes. Her heart sickened at all the arrangements of the room according to the custom of the Roman Catholic Church, with wax candles of the largest kind burning there.

"But what," said Lucy to herself, "does it matter," as she shuddered within herself at what

it all implied, "what does it matter? Cecil, my dearest brother, is far beyond all these mummeries now. He is enjoying that peace of which he told me he had had some foretaste, some assurance of, on earth. Now he is in glory, and the tale of redeeming love is fully revealed to him. Dear, happy spirit!" she ejaculated to herself as she finally gazed upon the lifeless form, imprinting, at the same time, upon its loved remains *one* last kiss. She took then her final leave, inwardly promising to herself that, according to her brother's dying request, she would give his Bible to his mother, and henceforth devote herself to the desire he had so earnestly expressed, that this his dear parent should be led out of error into the glorious simplicity of truth.

Nor did Lucy fail to deliver the paper entrusted to her for Father Giacomo, by poor Cecil, into his own hands, with a prayer that its contents might be blest to him.

Mr. Craven and his daughter visited the cemetery where the remains of their loved Cecil were interred; and then took leave, in much dejection, of the Eternal City, sailing for England *via* Leghorn.

And now I must conduct my readers over a space of ten years. Ten years! What a time, I hear some say, that is. Yes—ten years! Changes have taken place in the people, and in the places hitherto familiar to them. The children have grown into men and women, and have taken their respective parts in the drama of life. The time which has

elapsed introduces them in novel features, but I hope the sequel of my story will be found as interesting to my young friends as I indulgently hope they have felt the commencement to have been.

CHAPTER XXV.

"Now woods begin to wear the crimson leaf,
And suns grow meek, and the meek suns grow brief,
And the year smiles as it draws near its death."

ANON.

"WELL, Edith, but you have not half told me about your reception at Gainsborough, nor how you really like Lady Grey (my new aunt, as I ought to say); you are a most provoking girl. You know that I am dying to hear all about it, and you are so silent on the subject. Do come and sit down here by me, whilst you brush that beautiful hair of yours, and tell me whether you think you shall really like to live at home. What shall I do when you are gone, my dear, good little cousin—Anne married, and away? We have lived so long now together, too, as sisters, it will be dreadful to me to lose you."

"I am sure, dear Marion, I shall miss you," returned Edith; "Paington has been quite a home to me, and you and Anne like sisters. But I shall not be *always* banished; I shall be permitted often, I hope, to come and stay a little. If I have not told you all you wished to know of my reception at home, it has arisen from the fact of my having only arrived yesterday afternoon; and, to be very honest

with you, my thoughts have been dwelling so much upon our approaching separation this evening, I have not felt in a very communicative mood"—and a slight shadow crossed her beautiful countenance as she affectionately put her arm round her cousin Marion's neck, and drew her chair close to hers, according to her desire—" but I will now answer all your questions. Lady Grey is a very quiet person, and extremely lady-like, with very gentle manners. My father, you know, dear Marion, I may really say, is almost a stranger to me. *He* was kind, most kind, I am sure; and when I live at home I hope to make him love me. As yet he knows nothing of me, I may say; and papa would always much rather have had a boy, as dear old Budd used to say."

" Love you, Edith! who could help loving you? I am sure my uncle already loves you as much as he is proud of you. And poor Budd, so you saw her?"

" Yes, indeed I did; papa gave her one of the almshouses, endowed by my own dear mamma; and I paid poor nurse a visit every day almost, I was at Gainsborough."

" And when are you to leave us?" enquired Marion Fitzwilliam.

" I suppose in less than a month. My father and Lady Grey are about to make a few visits, and on their way home they are coming here, when, of course, I shall return with them."

" That will be after our visit to Everton, which I am rejoiced at. I am glad to have you with me then."

"Oh! are we going to Everton?" enquired Edith.

"Yes," returned Marion; "mamma purposes accepting Miss Vivian's invitation, and we are to pass a few days with them. Sir Allyne and his sister have called here once or twice while you were away. He is a very nice young man, and they say that *she* is very amiable. We hardly knew anything of them before we went abroad, you know we were all such children; and, since our return, they have been away from home so much. It is right that, being such near neighbours, we should be better acquainted; and," continued Marion, "the Vivians of Summerfield are to be there. Dear Mrs. Vivian! she was here the day before yesterday, and enquired *particularly* for *you*. She is expecting Arthur from Cambridge, where he has just been ordained; and, would you believe it, Edith? he has accepted the Curacy of Everton—assistant to Mr. Graham, fancy that!"

"Well, I think," rejoined Edith, "nothing could be more natural, considering the relationship that exists between Sir Allyne Vivian and himself, as I conclude he has been his nominator, of course."

The cousins continued chatting over recent events until the dying embers of their dressing-room fire warned them it was time to go to bed.

As Edith Trevor will now take a prominent part in my story, it will be necessary to go back a little, and give my readers a slight sketch of her history since

we last left her, a mere child. She had, with her cousins, resided much on the continent, on her aunt, Lady Fitzwilliam's, account, whose health had so materially benefited, after the first two winters spent at Paris, that Sir James determined on continuing abroad, making only occasional visits to England. They had travelled through Italy, Switzerland, and Germany, and France; but the last two years (her aunt's health being entirely restored), had been passed between Paington Abbey and Sir James's marine residence in the Isle of Wight. Miss Sinclair, who my readers may remember as their governess, had but just left them, the deepest regret being manifested on both sides. She had fulfilled, in the most exemplary manner, her important trust, as regarded Anne and Marion Fitzwilliam, her eldest pupils, and, at Lady Fitzwilliam's request, had continued with Edith till within a month; when, upon her receiving Lord Grey's (her father's) summons to return home, Miss Sinclair had taken her leave.

Lord Grey, for some years, had filled a diplomatic mission at Vienna, and had entirely resigned his daughter's education to his sister. He had, but the year before, announced his intention of marrying again; and shortly after presented the new Lady Grey to his family. She was an amiable person, possessing few, however, of the very attractive and fascinating qualities of his first wife; totally, alas! deficient in the one great requisite for which Edith's mother had been so pre-eminent, viz., a saving and

vital knowledge of religion; but her passive disposition and acquiescent character was perfectly suited to Lord Grey, and congratulations on all sides were made him upon his apparent happy choice. On their finally establishing themselves at Gainsborough Castle, after a tour of visits they made on their marriage, Lady Grey manifested her anxious desire that Edith should return home at once; which proposition was viewed, by the different members of Lord Grey's family, as a pleasing sign of kindly feeling on her part towards her young step-daughter.

Edith had parted from her cousin Marion a little more than a month before, in London, to pay her father and Lady Grey a visit, and she had only, on this very day, returned to the Abbey, to bid her aunt, and uncle, and cousin (one who had, indeed been more than a sister to her) a final farewell. Lord and Lady Grey were to join her at Paington, when it was arranged she should return with them. Brought up by the same person, educated together, and deeply attached to each other, there could rarely, perhaps, have been found two girls of such opposite dispositions; both amiable, their characters were, nevertheless, totally dissimilar. Edith, as we have before said (junior by three or four years), was senior in most things. Thoughtful beyond her years, with an accuracy of judgment surprising in one so young, she united a modesty and simplicity that won her the affection of those who acknowledged her superiority. Noble and generous to a fault,

the happiness of others was ever her first consideration; and she never hesitated on any self-sacrifice, when, by so doing, a fellow-being might be benefited. Nature had been peculiarly lavish in her personal gifts to her, and the beautiful child had now developed into the lovely girl. But Edith's beauty was enhanced by her entire unconsciousness of it, for vanity formed no ingredient in her character. The early seeds of grace, sown by her mother (and subsequently watered and fostered by her excellent governess, Miss Sinclair), had taken root in a genial soil, and now gave early promise of fruit; for Edith, young as she was, had learned to prize the Word of God, and strove to walk in accordance with its precepts. Her cousin Marion possessed none of Edith's refinement of feeling, and would often gently ridicule what she used jokingly to call "her funny way of viewing things." Marion was extremely thoughtless and *irreflechi* whilst she possessed a warm and affectionate heart, would sometimes almost lead one to think that she had neither, from mere want of consideration. Extremely pretty, she wanted Edith's modesty to prevent the ill-natured remarks which were constantly made on her conceit; which were, in truth, ill merited, as Marion's vanity might more appropriately have been termed a species of *coquetterie;* which, like many others of her age, girls sometimes assume from, perhaps, a little exaggerated idea of their personal attractions, which invariably deteriorates from whatever real beauty they may

possess. But if Marion had defects (and who is without?) she had sterling points of character too. Easily convinced when in error, few could be more repentant than herself, or more frank in the avowal of her faults. Warmly attached to Edith, she loved her as much as she admired her, and was ever the first to bring forward her virtues when opportunity offered. Educated by so excellent and truly pious a person as was Miss Sinclair, one might reasonably have expected, like her sister Anne and cousin Edith, that Marion also would have received the truth; but in her case, as with multitudes of young persons, educated with every religious advantage, she was under no religious impressions.

How often are we constrained to see and acknowledge, that "Not by power, nor by might, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord," that man may sow, and water, and plant, but God only can give the increase. To say that Marion had no care for, or that she despised spiritual things, would be doing her injustice. Religious principle had, from her earliest years, been the influence under which she had grown up, without her being even aware of it; but whilst the force of habit made that uppermost which was not innermost, her heart had not, as yet, received the genial influence of God's Holy Spirit. Marion had not yet been awakened to any conviction of sin. Morning and evening saw her, with her cousin, before they laid down to rest, the Bible in hand (and no religious duty could ever be said to be omitted by

her), the vital principle alone was wanting—the humble self-examination—the earnest prayer for divine aid—the casting off of self—the lowly posture at the foot of the cross! And Edith, whose heart so early had been touched by heavenly grace, had often mourned over her dear companion's satisfaction in the mere outward *performances* (and, latterly, a very evident bias for, and growing admiration of, the religious errors so widely diffusing around them), attaching to outward forms and observances a far greater importance than to that of spiritual truth. Nor did she omit to pray earnestly for her dear Marion, well knowing it to be our duty and privilege, at the throne of grace, to remember those we love, especially in asking for them "spiritual gifts," which we are assured of receiving in "the written Word of God."

CHAPTER XXVI.

"How frail the creed which 'erring nature' moulds
When darkness rushes on the doom of man."

It was a pouring wet day, and the rain continued to patter unmercifully against the windows of a furnished apartment, *au troisième*, in one of the best streets in the town of ———, Belgium. At one of them, seated at her embroidery frame, every now and then casting a wistful glance on the street, to see if there was the smallest hope of any cessation of the rain, which, for the last three hours had kept her a prisoner to the house, we find Mildred Vernon, no longer the lovely child we left ten years back, in all the sunshine of prosperity and affluence; but the pretty interesting girl of seventeen, now under the cloudy sky of adversity, with all its numberless sad accompaniments. Within the last three years, Mr. Vernon had met with sudden and most overwhelming reverses, so stunning in their consequences, that it required all his wife's sweetness of character, and admirable fortitude of mind, to enable him (accustomed as he had been, from his cradle, to command, and obey his own wishes and will) to bear the now

humbling truth that he was a rich man no longer; that it was his wealth that had surrounded him with friends, and that, as simply Mr. Vernon, now no longer of Ivy Tower, past hospitalities, hardly, if ever, remembered (in short, by the world forgot), he must sink into insignificance! All this in no way tended to improve a disposition which my readers may, perhaps, recollect was, even in days of "sunshine," somewhat impatient and irascible—but we must do him justice. Mr. Vernon was a highly honourable man; his misfortunes were not of his own making; they had not proceeded from extravagance, but from a succession of failures, and a train of circumstances over which there was no power of control. He hesitated not, at once, to part with his paternal property, and thereby satisfy the demands of those who had claims upon him (though their claims were legally unjust), and retain, in so doing, the happy consciousness of owing no man anything. This done, the resolution taken to go abroad, and live as cheap as their now very limited means would permit, he sank into a state of the greatest depression of mind, considered himself one of the most injured of men, and, as all those who know not God, and consequently cannot recognize the hand of mercy in an afflictive dispensation, he viewed his Maker only in the light of a hard task-master. His manner of bearing his severe misfortune tended, in no small degree, to increase poor Mrs. Vernon's weight of sorrow; but here shone

out, in the day of adversity, all that was lovely and sterling in her truly Christian character. Religion was her refuge, her prop, her stay; and, with a patience which *that* alone can impart, Mrs. Vernon bore meekly the daily repinings, and daily murmurings and discontent of her husband, encouraging and cheering him with hopes of brighter days. Inwardly and fervently did she pray the while that the affliction, grievous and heavy as it was, might be sanctified to him. But she had yet a secret sorrow—one corroding at her heart, which she bore daily to the throne of grace, and endeavoured to leave there. This was for Mildred—for her darling child. She could well bear the loss of every comfort, her luxuries, and all the elegant accompaniments of wealth to which she had ever been accustomed; all these she could have resigned easily, if Mildred only could have been spared the trial; and though she struggled hard to submit herself, committing her child to Him who desires us to cast all our solicitudes *upon* Him, she trembled *now*, when the thought of the future for her crossed her mind. Mildred had been nursed in the lap of luxury; every advantage, that money could command, had been bestowed upon her; and when, at fourteen, on their leaving England, her father had found himself obliged to part with Miss Howard (Mildred's amiable governess), Mr. Vernon's fortune having so suddenly failed, her poor mother's fears were awakened for her dear Mildred's education suffering loss. The

advantages the continent offered made her husband's determination to reside there very agreeable to her, as she knew that, independently of the economy of living abroad, she could obtain the very best masters at an extremely moderate rate, and this brightened the prospect to her. They made trial of a year's residence respectively at Frankfort, Munich, and Dresden; and after these three years we find them at ———, where Mr. Vernon seemed inclined to remain.

Poor Mrs. Vernon! she had had reason to feel that, in the midst of all her troubles, much mercy had been mingled in the cup. She felt this as she looked with feelings of maternal pride on the object of all her solicitude. Mildred was, indeed, all that the fondest parent could desire; and gifted by nature with considerable talent, there were few things she attempted unsuccessfully. She painted well, played on the piano and harp beautifully. Music was her natural gift, and her taste had been exquisitely cultivated. Of an extremely gentle disposition, she inherited, in addition, all her mother's patience of character, and quiet endurance; and so dignified and graceful was her deportment, Mildred won the universal love and good will of all around her. Her respect for her mother was extreme, as was her dutiful affection for her, and no sacrifice could be, in her mind, too great to make, to please or gratify *her*. She bore, without one word of repining, the now necessary

denial of all the natural desires and amusements genial to a girl of her age, knowing that her father's severe reverses was the primary cause; and excluded as she was, from this reason, from the power of moving much in the gay world (to which, from her birth and station in society, she was every way entitled)—if ever a feeling of disappointment or vexation arose in her heart on hearing of some gay doings, which, on the score of prudence, her dear mother was obliged to forego, she instantly checked it, and amiably concealed her chagrin. Nevertheless, Mildred Vernon had her faults. Sensitive, almost to a misfortune, she suffered more intensely than could be conceived from any injustice or wrong done her, and her pride lent a reserve to her general character, which prevented her being always as easily understood as too often she would have wished to have been.

The morning in question, Mrs. Vernon was busily engaged at her desk, writing, whilst Mildred (as we have before said), was at her work-frame. She had forborne her accustomed hour's recreation at the piano, lest she should disturb her mother, who, she perceived, to be more than ordinarily engaged, and for the same reason, she had maintained a long and unusual silence. At length Mrs. Vivian (who had noticed, notwithstanding her engrossing occupation, Mildred's occasional glances towards the window), was the first to speak.

"Does it still rain, my love?" she enquired, "I

was in hopes the weather might clear sufficiently for your father, on his return from the reading-room, to take you a walk."

"Alas! dear mamma, I fear I must content myself patiently staying at home; there does not appear even a hope of the weather brightening."

As she spoke, a carriage drove up to the door; Mildred strained her eyes to see who this visitor might be, and whether it was to them, or to the people *au premier* or *second etage*. In doing so she caught view of a bonnet and face that was familiar to her, and she exclaimed—

"My dear mamma, it is Augusta Clifford, I am pretty certain it is her that I caught a sight of; depend upon it she is come to pass the day here," and a deep colour heightened Mildred's cheeks, which as quickly subsided (not without, however, her mother's notice, though she said nothing), and before she could reply, the door opened, and the servant announced Miss Clifford, as she conjectured.

Mildred rose to receive her visitor, and Mrs. Vernon kindly extended her hand.

Augusta Clifford was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Clifford; her mother was a cousin of both Mrs. Vernon and the late Lady Vivian—but they had seen little of each other for years; and it was no little surprise to Mrs. Vernon to receive a letter from Mrs. Clifford when she found out where they were residing, informing her that *she* contemplated, too, passing the winter at B——.

Mildred had first met Augusta Clifford eighteen months previous to this, when she was, by her mother's permission, during a severe illness of Mr. Vernon's, paying a visit to Lady Catherine Douglas, and Mr. and Mrs. Montagu, near Hereford, for a few weeks. Miss Clifford was a few years older than Mildred, plain in feature, but with extremely fascinating manners; she was staying at Everton, when Mildred, with Lady Catherine and Colonel Douglas, were on their road to London, staying a fortnight, and where, according to arrangement, they were to leave Mildred with her Aunt, Lady Vansittart. Augusta professed a most sudden and violent affection for Mildred, that to many a girl as young as she was would have been, perhaps, very flattering; but not so to her; she possessed a perception of character very unusual to young people of her age; and, whilst she admitted that Augusta was a particularly good-natured girl, she shrunk from the intimacy Miss Clifford courted, with a sort of antipathy she could not account for. A year now had passed since they had become acquainted, and Mrs. Vernon had remarked, with some surprise, that Mildred had shown little or no pleasure when they first heard that the Cliffords were at B——. Visits, nevertheless, had been exchanged between the young people, and, more than once, Miss Clifford had brought her work, as on the present occasion, and volunteered to pass an hour or two with Mildred.

"Well," began Miss Clifford, as soon as she was seated, and had returned Mrs. Vernon's and her daughter's greeting, "it has seemed an age, Mildred, since we have seen one another; and the rain makes one feel so stupid in the house. There being no chance of its clearing up (or I had intended calling to ask you to walk), I lost all patience; so with mamma's leave, I had the carriage, brought my work basket, and here I am, to stay a little with you (that is to say, if I shall not be intruding on either you or Mrs. Vernon)?"

"By no means, my dear," returned the latter, "Mildred is, I am sure, most happy to see you; I hope Mrs. Clifford is well?"

"Mamma is, I thank you, for her, tolerable so, I left her with Lady Hamilton (Ann Fitzwilliam, that was); they are here for a fortnight on their road home. Do you go to them to-morrow night?" she continued, addressing Mrs. Vernon.

"I am but slightly acquainted with Lady Hamilton, she has kindly called once or twice, but we have been unfortunate in meeting, and Mr. Vernon's present state of health does not permit of his going out in the evening, or of my leaving him; Mildred, therefore, foregoes a great deal of pleasurable society."

"Mr. and Lady Ethell Priestly dine there; you are perhaps aware that she has but very recently recovered the loss of her child, a very lovely girl, who died very suddenly after a few days' illness at Rome.

Mamma thinks she is much altered," continued Augusta; "no longer as lovely as she was. They are now going to Everton."

"Yes," returned Mrs. Vernon, "I remember hearing of the loss of her fine little girl; it was a severe blow to her."

"Oh very," replied Augusta. "By-the-bye, Mildred, you will be sorry, I am sure, to hear of poor Mrs. Craven of Woodfield's death. You remember how much you liked her daughter, Mrs. St. Maur."

"Mrs. Craven dead!" exclaimed Mildred. "Oh, mamma, you know how often I have spoken to you of her, and her daughter's devotion to her."

"Lucy Craven (that was), my love, I remember her well, when she was quite a child, and I used to be so much with Lady Catherine at the Grange, with my friends—then Edith and Emily Douglas. . . . . I have often heard of her sweet devotion, as you call it justly, to her mother, who was a Roman Catholic. For some years she lost her reason, poor thing, from the shock of her son—her only son's somewhat sudden death abroad; and her daughter, I remember hearing, would never leave her; even since her marriage, I believe she has resided always with her."

"Yes," replied Augusta, "but before her death Lady Catherine writes, mamma, Mrs. Craven not only recovered her reason, but to her daughter, Mrs. St. Maur's great satisfaction, died a Protestant!

She had suffered, however, so much, mentally and bodily, and her death was a great release."

"I do not wonder," rejoined Mildred; "her sufferings must have been great. I cannot fancy how it is people change their religion—certainly for one of such mummery as the Romish faith. Strange delusion!"

"My love, it is," here observed Mrs. Vernon, "either because they know not the simple truth, as we have it in God's Word, or Satan has so blinded their eyes, and puffed them up that wandering away from the light, they become enslaved, before they are even aware of their danger."

Mrs. Vernon was here interrupted by a person on business, who required her immediate attention, and she left the room, leaving the two girls to themselves.

"Lady Catherine also mentions another piece of intelligence, perhaps, interesting to you, Mildred," resumed Augusta, as Mrs. Vernon closed the door; whilst, as she spoke, she attentively watched the countenance of her companion; and this is an *on dit* of Emmeline Vivian, a whisper that she is going to be married; you know that I suspected it a long time, and how, when we were last year at Everton, we used to say that it would be a match; but I dare say you know already all about it, and of course Mrs. Vernon does. Mr. Tudor is a near neighbour of Lady Catherine's, and a very rich man."

"Indeed," returned Mildred, looking up at length from her work, "you *do* surprise me; I assure you neither mamma or I have even heard such a rumour. We do not hear often from Emmeline, but if it is really true that she is going to be married, of course she will tell us all about it herself. But why did you say, Emmeline's marrying would so very particularly interest me?"

"Oh, because I know that she and you, are not over-fond of each other; and though I naturally supposed that, as your cousin, an event so nearly concerning her happiness, might interest you, I had other reasons . . . too." . .

"And what, may I ask, might those be?" enquired Mildred, whilst her fitful colour seemed slightly to betray a fear of hearing the truth, "what makes you think, Augusta, that my cousin and I are not fond of one another?"

"Oh, Mildred, Mildred, ever too quick to take offence! Do you really think, my dear child, that I am to be so easily deceived? You need not be so vexed at my penetrating the truth, that Emmeline never liked you *because* her brother did. Nay, nay, you cannot deny it, and every one knows that it is an old story; and further, that *now* Emmeline is about to marry, her brother, Sir Allyne, of course, will follow her example. And *this* is the part of my story I thought might interest you."

"Why so—how could it be interesting to me?"

interrupted Mildred with considerable warmth, "I have often, very often, asked you to cease annoying me in this very foolish unmeaning way."

"But why should it annoy you, Mildred? You *know* it was observed by every one, last year at Everton, that Sir Allyne made no disguise of showing *who he admired*, and it is not a thing to be denied, whatever you may say; 'blushes are great tell-tales,' you know; but never mind, we shall see, we shall see! if Sir Allyne is not too much *epris* with the beautiful heiress, Miss Trevor, or her cousin, Marion Fitzwilliam (Lady Hamilton's sister). The Vivians are just now entertaining a large party at Everton, and Lady Hamilton told me that to-day her sister and cousin were to be of the number, and that this Miss Edith Trevor, Lord Grey's daughter, was quite a catch, besides being a very lovely fascinating girl."

Oh, how wilily did Augusta Clifford watch the effect her conversation had on Mildred, as she finished speaking, whilst she had been endeavouring to read the inmost recesses of her young companion's heart.

"Edith Trevor!" exclaimed Mildred Vernon, with some surprise (admirably concealing whatever other emotions her friend's communication had excited), "I used to know Edith Trevor—but quite as a child. She must be about my own age."

"Well," replied Augusta, she is running the chance that all other young ladies run, who pay a visit to Everton. She *may* be so fortunate as to

fascinate Sir Allyne effectually, for I am told she sings and plays most beautifully; and he *is such* a passionate admirer of music! But I am really making you quite a visitation, I suppose I must go now; but my dear Mildred how mournful you look, I am sure you are sadly moped at home; your father's state of health must be a great trial to you, indeed," (rising as she spoke, and drawing on the shawl she had allowed negligently to fall on the back of her chair), "pray come and see me when you can."

"Indeed," replied Mildred, "I am not at all moped," faintly smiling at the suggestion, and rising at the same time, "you are quite wrong; my tastes are extremely quiet, and though my dear father's ill health is very distressing, it deprives me of no pleasure, for I do not care the least for going out."

"I dare say not, Mildred," resumed Miss Clifford; "you know I always said you were a paragon of perfection, *you never think* a wrong thought; I could never bear to lead the life you do. Well, I shall come again soon and make you another visit, so good bye now." And thus they parted; the one to return to the vortex of the world, the other to her embroidery and her reflections. But Mildred did not long remain alone; she was roused from her train of thoughts by the entrance of her mother.

"Well," she said, as she quickly observed Mildred's somewhat serious caste of countenance,

"your visitor gone, and all alone, Mildred? I do not think my love, do you know," she continued, as Mrs. Vernon advanced and took a seat for a moment near her daughter, "that Augusta's visits ever give you much pleasure; she is no particular friend or favourite of yours, I fancy."

"Well, mamma, she is not, I confess; and yet she *can* be most good-natured. To-day she was very communicative, and most disagreeably so too; gave me some news of my cousins at Everton—about Emmeline—which I believe you are as ignorant of as myself. Did you know that she was going to marry Mr. Tudor?"

"No dear, I did not know it indeed; but I hear so very rarely now from Emmeline that it does not at all surprise me. And was that all that Augusta had to say?"

"Oh, something more; she began in her old way to annoy me very much about Allyne again, referring to the foolish remarks, you remember I told you of, my dear mother, that were made upon my cousin Allyne's attention to me, last year, at Everton."

"It is most natural dearest Mildred, that this should annoy you, to a certain extent; but to care about it would be wrong. That Allyne did show you a preference you had every right to believe meant something more we well know; but he saw fit to change his mind. You,

and your poor father's reverses together, combined to influence him; but, my love, you have long been taught that all these matters are ordered for us by a gracious Father, who cannot err; and therefore, we must be sure that, with regard to yourself, in this particular it has been wisely appointed, as, doubtless, we shall some day see. You are not, either, by all accounts, the first who, Allyne, from indecision of character and want of due reflection, has led to suppose he meant what he really did not. But you have, Mildred, too much real dignity and right pride, I know, to bestow a thought further on that head—a whole year, and more, having passed without the slightest recollection of you on his part."

"Most certainly, dearest mamma," replied Mildred, rising, and putting her arm affectionately round her mother's neck, whilst a tear stood in her eye in spite of herself, "you, who know every feeling I have, my best and dearest of mothers—you alone know that I did like Allyne, because I believed myself right in thinking that he had a preference for me, and that that preference was sincere. . . . that this was a mistake, that it never could have been the case, I see now too plainly; but, surely, Emmeline could never have influenced Allyne unkindly towards me, as Augusta hinted to-day, almost impertinently, I felt, saying, 'Emmeline, she thought, never liked me, *because* her brother *did*.'"

"This would be wrong, dearest," returned Mrs.

Vernon, "too uncharitable a surmise; but I will not disguise any longer that I have often thought it very strange (considering our sad reverses, and the many privations such a change of fortune imposes) that Emmeline never once invited you to Everton, for she is sole mistress there, and Allyne has always been so liberal in his desire that she should invite who she liked to stay with her. I have often wished for this, as his feelings would thereby have been very clearly ascertained, and your mistake as well (whilst *her* Christian character would have shone brightly forth, rising superior to every selfish consideration); but we must not for one moment suppose that she would or could influence her brother against you, dear child. He is quite his own master, and at liberty to do as he pleases. Come, let us for ever dismiss the subject, and never let a shadow of the past cross your mind. Let us go out; I see the weather is clearing, and we will take advantage of the fair moment for a walk; and, if we can get so far, I wish to call on Lady Hamilton.

CHAPTER XXVII.

"How feverish all the pomp and play of life!"

ANON.

"SIT down, Edith; sit down, and listen; the house is quite full! Lady Hetherington, and her two daughters; Lady Eveline, and Lady .... Forster—I forget her name—are here; Lord Hetherington, and his son; Lord Forster, too; some Miss Sandfords, and their father; Mr. Hadon, Miss Vivian's intended—for it is quite true she is to be married; and somebody else, but I cannot remember who; and last, not least, dear Mrs. Vivian, and Arthur!" and Marion's countenance here brightened with unfeigned pleasure. "I have just taken a turn with these last, and have heard all the news, which I want to tell you very much. I should never have known where to find you in this vast, straggling house, but for Graham, who met me wandering about, and brought me right at last."

These words were uttered by Marion to her cousin, Edith Trevor, on the afternoon of their arrival at Everton. She had taken a stroll round the beautifully laid-out grounds with Mrs. Vivian and her son —her old friend and early companion, Arthur Vivian,

now just ordained, as we have before said, and entered upon his new duties, as curate of Everton.

"Arthur is just the same kind creature he ever was," continued the lively Marion; a *little* more serious, I think, in his views than last year. But now, tell me, my grave little judge, what have you been doing since our arrival?"

"Well," returned Edith, smiling, "I have been reading to Aunt Fitzwilliam; as you know, she always likes it, while she rests on the sofa in her dressing-room."

"And what, may I ask, did you read to her, Edith?"

"Dr. Cumming's *Voices of the Night;* which I find most interesting, as well as most instructive."

"You don't mean it, Edith! My dear Edith, what! read to mamma the writings of a Dissenter? I cannot conceive *how* you can possibly admire Cumming's works. What must mamma think of *my* choice when I do the said office for her? I generally take ..... How can you, Edith, be so Low Church?"

"Indeed, Marion, I am not what you consider and mean by Low Church, whilst I must confess that I do greatly admire my dear Dr. Cumming's writings. Truth is ever lovely; and every word he writes is stamped with genuine, simple truth. One *must* admire and love his works."

"I wonder," rejoined Marion, musingly, "whether Arthur is a Cummingite. I must ask him. In the

meanwhile, surely, we must dress;" and she rose from the little low *bergère* on which she had been sitting, and, touching her bell for her maid, began to prepare for her toilette.

"Edith, Edith, you are indeed bent upon making the conquest of our young host. I never saw you look so pretty—nay, quite lovely!" exclaimed Marion, as she turned to contemplate her young cousin, having finished her own somewhat lengthened toilette.

Edith had been dressed for some time, and had taken up a book in which she was deeply interested, when her cousin made her this compliment. And, in truth, she did look very pretty in her simple white muslin dress, her rich glossy black hair braided off her Madonna face; the interest of her book had given a bright colour to her cheek, and her beautiful dark eyes, as she looked up to answer Marion, were brilliant in the extreme.

"I may, I think, dearest Marion, return you the compliment," said Edith; "*jolie comme une rose*, as our French friends used always to tell you; but, as you know I must shelter myself under your wing, as I positively feel quite timid at the idea of the throng below you told me we are to meet."

"I suppose we must, nevertheless, go down," said Marion. "Never mind, *ma belle petite cousine*."

So saying, they were on the point of leaving their room, when they were met by Graham, who came to summon them to Lady Fitzwilliam's

apartment, to descend with her to the drawing-room.

"Who is that very pretty girl?" whispered Lord Forster to his sister, Lady Eveline (by whom he was sitting, whilst she and Miss Sandford were chatting together), as Edith Trevor and Marion Fitzwilliam entered the room.

"What pretty girl do you mean?" returned his sister, as she raised her small, aristocratic head, to survey the persons entering the room, who had elicited such excessive commendation from her brother; "I only see Lady Fitzwilliam and her daughter; she has a certain reputation for being rather pretty."

"No, not Miss Fitzwilliam, but the other with them."

"Oh! I have not the least notion," she continued, as her ladyship more particularly scrutinized the object of her brother's admiration, who, with her cousin and Lady Fitzwilliam, now advanced towards them.

"It is Miss Trevor!" whispered Olivia Sandford, having overheard Lord Forster's inquiry; "a niece of Lady Fitzwilliam's, and daughter of Lord Grey, whose first wife was her ladyship's sister. But, do you think her so remarkably pretty, Eveline?"

"No, decidedly not; but Forster has such odd fancies; quite a child, too!"

Whilst they were thus speaking, Marion Fitzwilliam, finding a seat unoccupied by her dear Mrs. Vivian, gladly availed herself of it, and placing

Edith beside her, was quickly engaged in lively conversation.

Marion was a great favourite of Mrs. Vivian's; and as the Fitzwilliams were but lately returned to the neighbourhood, they had many mutually interesting objects to talk about.

Arthur Vivian was not long in finding an excuse for joining them; whilst Edith, a comparative stranger amongst them, amused herself in quiet observation on what was passing around, little thinking how much she was herself the object of universal attention.

"We must have music this evening, Emmeline," said Sir Allyne Vivian to his sister, as he entered the drawing-room soon after dinner, and advanced to the ottoman on which she was sitting, conversing with Lady Fitzwilliam and her aunt, Lady Hetherington.

"Miss Sandford will, I am sure, gratify us again to-night," returned his sister, looking, as she spoke, towards the said young lady; "and, perhaps, Miss Fitzwilliam sings too, and will allow us the pleasure of hearing her. My brother is so very fond of music."

"If Miss Fitzwilliam will take the lead, I have no objection to offer my poor services afterwards, my dear Miss Vivian," returned Miss Sandford, with somewhat of irony in her tone.

Marion, with the easy alacrity of good breeding, rose immediately to comply with the request made

her. "My cousin and I usually sing together, and we shall be very happy to sing you either French, German, or Italian, or English, Sir Allyne," she added, with the smile which was the great charm of her animated countenance, and with a little sign to Edith to follow her, she moved to take her place at the piano.

"German, German! by all means, Miss Fitzwilliam, if you are really so good-natured;" and Sir Allyne advanced to the magnificent instrument, which was situated in the best possible position in the noble and vast apartment, so as to do justice to performers as well as auditors.

Miss Fitzwilliam's voice was a rich *contralto*, and full in its tones. She had had the best instruction on the Continent; and her style of singing was universally admired. Edith Trevor's was a very powerful *alto soprano*, exquisitely sweet, combining great delicacy of feeling with the management of her voice—the effects of good teaching.

"How beautiful—how very sweet!" burst from all sides (as the voices of the two cousins blended together), with one only exception, and that from the corner where Lady Eveline Forster and her friend, Miss Sandford, had ensconced themselves.

The piano was speedily surrounded; and they were solicited again and again for another song.

Both Edith and Marion, with the greatest good-humour, complied; until at length the latter rose,

saying, they really must not wholly monopolize the piano.

Lady Eveline Forster and Miss Sandford were not, however, disposed to succeed them, but declined performance "after such exquisite singing!"

"Will you not play something, Miss Fitzwilliam?" said Sir Allyne, as Marion rose from the instrument.

"I do not play, Sir Allyne, but my cousin does. Edith," said she, turning round to her companion, "you will, perhaps, oblige Sir Allyne?"

Edith sat down, and with a perfection of touch, combined with brilliancy of execution, charmed her hearers, and none so completely as Sir Allyne himself, whose love of music amounted to a passion.

"And so you are now installed curate at Everton, Mr. Vivian?" said Marion (as, with the freedom of an old friend, Arthur took a seat he found unoccupied by her).

"Yes," returned the young man, with a half-sigh, "I have undertaken responsibilities and duties I trust I may be enabled to perform as becomes one who has entered on so sacred and serious a calling as mine. But it will call for sacrifices, and much devotion of time to the good of others! Everton is a large parish, and error is so subtilly abroad! We, as shepherds of Christ's flock, need to be on our watch, to shield and defend the sheep!"

A slight shadow flitted across Marion's sweet, placid brow.

"And what do *you* term error? *I* hear so much

uncharitable affixing every difference of opinion to error, I should like much to know from one," continued she, "who is *now* set over me in 'holy things' what *he* terms error."

"In simple words—though I should hardly fancy you to be ignorant of its true meaning—my dear Marion (Miss Fitzwilliam, I mean), whatever is contrary to Scripture, the foundation of all truth."

"But Scripture, you must allow, Mr. Vivian, is now differently, widely differently interpreted! There is hardly one who agrees with another in the same view of a verse."

"Error will ever blind the truth. Man's heart is so deceitful by nature, that he will invariably, in his unconverted state, prefer error to truth; but if we earnestly seek for the truth, desiring to find it, God's Holy Spirit is promised for our assistance. Look," continued Arthur, with warmth, "at Puseyism; see what a bandage it places on the eyes of its followers—obscuring truth altogether."

"Stay, stay, Mr. Vivian. You are *severe*," returned Marion, "with regard to Puseyism somewhat. I do not think we quite agree. High Church principles, in other words, I cannot allow, obscures truth. You will, perhaps, think very ill of me; but it is best you should know my real feelings on the subject."

Arthur Vivian was thoroughly unprepared for the expression of similar sentiments. The interest he had always felt in her who sat beside him, and

which lately deepened into a far stronger feeling —could it have so blinded him as to have made him believe Marion Fitzwilliam, the early companion and favourite of his boyhood, to have had the same views of gospel truth as himself—views to him which were dearer than all on earth beside! The bare idea that it was otherwise, was as painful to him as it was surprising.

"Think ill of you, because we disagree? Oh no!" returned Arthur, "it would ill become one of my profession to think ill of any one, much less of her, who, I would hope, remembers, with some indulgence, the claims of early friendship. But I will own I was unprepared for—I was not aware of your sentiments —I could have wished (and his handsome countenance, as he bent his eyes on the ground, became slightly overshadowed) we had differed in less essential truths; but, as I before said (and allow me, with the freedom of an old friend, to urge on you the consideration of the subject) I believe Puseyism on the simple ground, that it leads away from Him who is the way, the truth, and the life, to be the most fatal error of the day. The Holy Spirit can alone lead us into truth. May it be given to you, my dear Marion," so saying, with feelings he was only too anxious to disguise, Arthur Vivian rose from his seat, before even Marion could reply.

"I have offended him," thought she to herself, "Arthur had a better opinion of me," and the reflec-

tion did not serve to brighten Marion's usually sunshiny countenance.

She was glad to avail herself of the little distraction of her fancy-work, to cover the dissatisfaction she could ill conceal, *with herself*, and all around her. But she was disturbed from a train of reflection (in which Summerfield, the Vivians, early happy days, and dear, good Miss Sinclair, all had their part) by Lady Mary Forster, who, taking the seat Arthur Vivian had vacated, beside Marion, began in her usual lively way—

"What a beautiful girl your cousin is, Miss Fitzwilliam; I declare, Sir Allyne, seems quite *epris déjà;* he will not allow her to leave the piano this evening, you'll see; her singing is just the style Allyne raves about; I quite wonder Lady Fitzwilliam takes you both out together."

"Is it Edith Trevor, my cousin Edith, your ladyship is speaking of," said Marion, with something of contemptuous disdain in her tone, whilst, for the first time, she became aware that it was Edith who still held her post at the instrument, and whose sweet voice had tended to soothe her disturbed state of mind (even though she had been ignorant of it); "she is, as you justly remark, lovely, and as good as she is lovely; but as to her going out with me, Lady Mary, we hardly call visiting in our own neighbourhood 'going out.' Edith has not yet come out, and is only here with us till her father and Lady Grey have re-

turned to Gainsborough, where she joins them next week."

"Miss Trevor will be a great catch," musingly observed Lady Mary; "I have, to-night, heard it whispered she is a great heiress."

The modest object of their conversation here joined them, her colour and beauty much heightened by the admiration and unusual applause that had been bestowed.

"Introduce me to your cousin, Miss Fitzwilliam," whispered Lady Mary, "we shall, I dare say, meet in London."

"Lady Mary Forster, Miss Trevor," said Marion, as Edith sat down on the other side; the latter bowed.

"Mary," said Lady Eveline, now approaching her sister, casting, at the same time, a very haughty, but well-concealed look at Edith, the innocent object of her ladyship's dislike, and in which might be detected much envy, as well as ill-nature, "Allyne is tormenting me so for our '*Treibe, Treibe,*' I suppose we must oblige him. Will you come and take your part with me?"

Lady Mary obeyed; and the music only ceased at the hour of prayer, when Mr. Vivian was requested by his cousin to officiate. In an exceedingly impressive manner he read the portion of Scripture he had selected, which was 2 Tim. iv., and afterwards knelt in prayer. It might have been fancy, but it seemed to Marion as if his voice was more earnest

than usual in the simple, short, but fervent prayer Arthur offered for all present; and when he proceeded to petition that none might be permitted to remain in error, but that all might be brought, by the power of God's grace, to the light of the glorious truths of the gospel, Marion could not help feeling deeply affected.

"Oh, Marion!" began Edith, when they once more found themselves in their rooms for the night, "I hope papa and Lady Grey will allow me to follow my own quiet tastes; when I go home I shall never wish to go out in what is termed the world."

"And what has so disgusted you to-night, dearest," enquired her cousin, "as to make you take such an aversion to the *beau monde*, admired as you are, dear, pretty Edith, I can tell you, by more than ONE person, and will be by many, many more."

"Nothing, dear Marion, in particular; but that I see, more and more, why the Word of God says, 'Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.' Conversation is so frivolous—so foolish; and there is so much waste of time! Lord Forster talked such nonsense to me at dinner, you cannot think."

"Well, you will, probably, have to go through all that, and your good sense will prevent it doing you any harm. Your position in society will call you, too, into life; and, as an heiress, Edith, you will be greatly courted; but I know you will always adorn your station. I wish I was half as good as you are."

"Oh, Marion! you are much too indulgent always

to me. *As good as I am!* Who knows you, and all your goodness, as well as I do?"

"Ah!" said Marion, with a deep sigh, "but I am not as religious as you are, Edith; I do not think quite as you do. *You* would please Arthur Vivian better than *I can;* you are more of *his* mind than *I am.*"

"*I* please Mr. Vivian more than you, Marion! Oh! how can you speak thus? What has happened to night?" continued Edith, as, for the first time, she observed the countenance of her dear companion, so usually glowing with sunshine, now really downcast and sad, at the same time putting her arm affectionately round her waist, and looking earnestly at her. "What, dear Marion, is the matter?"

"Nothing; only I see, plainly—I know Arthur thinks—I know that he is quite surprised that I do not agree with him in his Low Church views. I was very honest with him to-night; and I have offended him—I have disappointed him."

"Well, but you spoke as you felt, dearest, I know, you are so sincere. Mr. Vivian could not be offended, I am sure; he values sincerity."

But Marion was not so easily re-assured. Edith proposed a chapter in the Bible, as usual; and, after awhile, they retired to rest.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"We learn Divinity by loving God,
And, *as* we love, alone can understand."

MONTGOMERY.

It was a fine, clear morning; the sun shone brightly as Mrs. Vivian and her son sat together at the breakfast-table, discussing the events of the preceding night at Everton.

"How do you mean, my dear Arthur? you quite surprise me. What has occasioned this change with regard to Marion, my favourite Marion?" enquired Mrs. Vivian, in reply to an observation her son had made, which had somewhat startled her.

"You, in some measure, indeed, mistake me, my dear mother, if from what I have said you imagine me changed in those feelings, you have so long been aware I have entertained, of the deepest regard for Marion Fitzwilliam; those could never change. But *you*, who know the hopes I have allowed myself to indulge in, that, perhaps, some day, she would have been contented to link her lot with mine, can best judge of the disappointment I experience in finding her so widely differing with myself in views, I consider, so essentially necessary to happiness here

and hereafter. Marion is High Church in her sentiments. Were you aware of this, mother?"

"No; I could hardly have believed that possible. In her early youth, our dear young friend was most piously educated by an excellent governess—had the gospel most faithfully preached by our worthy friend, Mr. Graham; but if, from her family's long residence abroad, she has acquired any erroneous ideas, *you* may, my dear Arthur, in God's gracious providence, you know, be permitted to be made very useful to her. Marion has so very sweet a disposition, combined with such an excellent understanding, that if she has acquired any tendency towards those erroneous opinions, which I cannot believe, as I have before said, you will not find it either of any serious or vital importance, or that it should interfere with your wishes regarding her; and I will not conceal from you, that I have long cherished the hope myself, that some day I should be permitted to call her my daughter—and I still trust that this may yet be."

"My dear mother, you but faintly echo my own hopes and wishes. Would that I might be permitted to be of use to Marion; but, you know that I must not allow any influence of affections or feelings to interfere with my one first duty—my high calling! But I must haste away; I have an appointment with our Rector, Mr. Graham, early this morning, which I was very nearly forgetting."

So saying, Arthur Vivian left the room. Mrs.

Vivian remained, pondering on the recent conversation she had had with her son, for some time after he had left her. She was at length interrupted in her reverie, by the entrance of the very being who, at that moment, was engrossing her thoughts. This was Marion Fitzwilliam herself.

"Well, my dear child, this is a pleasure! To what am I indebted for this early visit from you? Come here, and take a seat near me, for I saw nothing of you last night."

"To execute a commission for Anne, dear Mrs. Vivian," returned Marion, as she obeyed her kind request, and took the offered chair. "My sister sends you a donation for the poor at Everton; and you know that I am always too glad of an excuse to pass half an hour with you."

"Dear Anne! this is most kind of her. Arthur will be as much gratified as he will be indebted for this recollection of his poor parishioners. When does Lady Hamilton give you hopes of her return?"

"I fear not before next year. She writes me that they propose wintering this year at B———, and passing the next summer in Switzerland."

"And you, my dear Marion, are you going to make a prolonged stay at Everton?"

"Oh dear, no! We return the day after to-morrow to Paington."

"Ethell and Mr. Priestly are expected to-day, at Everton, are they not?" enquired Mrs. Vivian.

"They are. I hear that *he* is in very bad health."

"Then," rejoined Mrs. Vivian, "they will, probably, remain all the winter at the Priory. I only wish that his return to his parish could give me any hopes of a change in the present state of things; for Mr. Allworth, his Curate, has carried things to a sad extent during his absence. And yet, I am not very sanguine in these expectations; for I have learnt, that Mr. Priestly has himself sanctioned these private confessions, now of every-day occurrence, in the vestry; and the coldness, and want of spiritual life in his little Church, is painful in the extreme. Rome herself is far less dangerous, in her avowed practical errors, than are these High Churchmen of the Church of England, in the introduction of these practices and unscriptural ways. The two parishes, also, being so proximate to each other, and so much subtle error disseminating in the one, Arthur finds it his greatest difficulty to prevent its *poison* from extending amongst our own people. But I am truly glad to see you, my dear child, as I want you to reassure me on this point of High Church feeling. I have certain little misgivings that we are not altogether of one mind on this subject. Am I right, dear Marion?"

"Well, perhaps in some things, dear, kind Mrs. Vivian; for, though I have ever admired your opinions, I will confess that I cannot myself see the extreme evil imputed to those called the High Church party; for, whilst I do admit private confession to be unnecessary, as *that* might lead to many abuses, I can

only see a desire in the many I know, to support the faith in which they were brought up, and the church calling itself, 'The Church of England,' by maintaining strictly the ritual; surely otherwise our reformers would (had they lived in these days), been called Puseyites."

"Alas! my dear Marion," affectionately replied Mrs. Vivian, "there is but one way alone of viewing these things. It is not the Church we are desired to uphold in God's Word, 'not any temple made with hands.' It is to keep the unity of the Spirit, exalt the Head, even Christ; and whatever glorifies Him, or sets Him forth, is the right support of His Church, which *we* are; but to detract from him, setting up our own doings, in the place of him, no matter under what plea, must be wrong."

"But dear Mrs. Vivian," replied Marion, "do you not think, in the very low state into which, you must allow, the Church of England to have fallen, that making the service of God a mere lucrative profession, which many do, and whilst they derive their incomes from the Church, neglect altogether their duties and responsibilities, and thereby increase the numbers of Dissenters—does it not appear to you that a certain revival *was* called for, and that the desire of those called the High Church Party, in reviving old customs, and requiring a stricter attention to the ordinances of our Church, was more from a desire to set things in order, than to exalt *themselves?* I may be wrong, but I feel we are a

little severe, nay, even wanting somewhat in charity, in imputing such wrong motives to what is termed Puseyism."

"Beware, my dear Marion, of that, so falsely called by the name of charity, which would blind you to the clear apprehension of the truth—the simple truth—with error—be it ever so well glossed over or varnished with the semblance of right. It is much to be regretted, indeed, that so many, wearing the livery of Christ, so dishonour their high privileges, of being ambassadors of, and for him, by their sad indifference, as you very correctly observe, to their charges and duties. But we should earnestly pray for the wider extension of the influence of God's Holy Spirit upon the hearts of those set apart for the ministry for *their* real *conversion*, and not be looking to what we can ourselves do, for that which God can alone give. Eustace Priestly, and many others like himself, remind me of the blind, leading the blind, in the time of our Lord, the Pharisees of old, who, in the words of Scripture, make clean the outside of the platter, but within are full of extortion and excess. They would wonderfully make chaunts and services, ordinances, and the sacraments even themselves, the essentials of salvation, instead of the means and privileges alone of the Christian. Arthur mentioned to me, with some concern, that he feared he perceived, in the few moments conversation he had with you, rather a leaning towards this prevailing error of the present day, but I could not relieve

his disquietude on this head, and I will own that he has raised in me some degree of anxiety too. Let me urge you my dear, dear girl, to give the matter on which we have been talking, your deep and most prayerful consideration. Educated as you were, almost under my own eyes, and knowing you from your earliest years, I naturally take a lively interest in all that concerns you, but above all for your spiritual welfare; and I, therefore, earnestly entreat you to pray to be enlightened to see the truthful importance of all that I have been saying. I hope you will on reflection see the danger of exalting the creature in place of the Creator; of substituting acts, enthusiastic acts of devotion and works, *almost* rendered *meritorious* for the humble adoration of the Lord who bought us, for the silent surrender of the heart to the Saviour, be it in the congregation of our loved Church of England, or in the Chapel of the Dissenter, both alike to him who is no respecter of persons."

Marion here rose to return to Everton. The words uttered by Mrs. Vivian, with her usual affectionate and earnest manner, had much impressed her; but there were feelings in her mind, that it would have been difficult for her to have found words to express, and for the first time of her life, she felt extremely anxious to hurry away. Too sincere to profess acquiescence, where her judgment was not convinced, or her conscience did not entirely approve, she could only, upon returning Mrs. Vivian's affectionate em-

brace, which she did with much cordiality, assuring her, whilst a tear moistened her eye, that she would think of what they had been speaking; only she oberved, that she hoped that neither herself nor Arthur would be too hasty in forming an unfavourable opinion of her. And so they parted, Marion plunged in the deepest thought. She had almost reached the large gates of the park, when she was met by the very person who, at this moment, she would rather have avoided, had it been possible—and this was Arthur Vivian; but, as there was no means of retreating, and her doing so might have looked unkind towards one she would, in truth, have been pained to offend, she endeavoured to conceal her feelings by giving him frankly her hand; but, notwithstanding that, he turned to accompany her in her walk through the grounds to the house, and spoke in his usual kind and friendly manner. She quickly observed a sort of restraint in him, which only served to increase an awkwardness which, for the first time in her life, she had ever felt in *his* company. After an unusually long pause, silence was at length broken by Arthur, who enquired where she had been so early in the morning.

"I have been to Summerfield," replied Marion, "paying your dear mother a visit; but it is not so very early, for me," she continued, looking, as she spoke, at her watch, "I am out almost every morning by eight o'clock."

"Then, probably, these are your property," said

Arthur, as, with an expression of some concern, he drew from his pocket a small Prayer Book, with a cross upon it, and a pocket-handkerchief, marked M.F. "These were given to me by Mr. Allworth, of Nutleigh, who I met on my road to Mr. Graham's, at Everton; he told me they belonged, *he thought, to you,* and that he would be much obliged to me to give them to you, and to mention that you had left them in the church this morning. I was not aware you attended Nutleigh Church," he continued, as he walked on beside her, his eyes steadily fixed on the ground.

"For some little time I have," returned Marion; "and these are truly all my property; I have, indeed, been most careless." Marion coloured deeply as she spoke; she felt sensible of Arthur's disapprobation, and it made her very uncomfortable, for there was evidently a serious misunderstanding increasing between them. "You do not approve of the early services, Mr. Vivian?" she continued, as she hastily recovered her usual self-possession and courage; "and yet, as a clergyman of the Church of England, surely you sanction what is laid down for us in our Book of Common Prayer?"

"I hope, as a clergyman of the Church of England, I *do* both highly value and sanction its book of Common Prayer, as I believe that every word is truly Scriptural; though I could never, of itself, disapprove of its enjoined morning prayers, I do unhesitatingly condemn the system in which this Puseyism

takes a most prominent part. We are not living now in times when it behoves us to make outwardly *so much* our Protestant profession, *as* at that period when our Ritual was compiled, when daily service was introduced to impress the mind with the urgent necessity of daily prayer to God, when domestic prayer was never heard of; but *now* that the family altar is so universally adopted in every well-regulated house, I feel that far too much importance is attached to this custom of the Reformers, and I believe, myself, that the assembling ourselves together with our families and household, for the reading of the Bible, accompanied with prayer, to be far more useful. But I will not allow this opportunity to pass without telling you, dear Marion—I cannot call you Miss Fitzwilliam—how deeply concerned I am to see that *you are* evidently prepossessed in favour of this system, which I unhesitatingly consider one of error, dangerous error. Permit me to talk a little with you upon it; you are not, perhaps, aware how much my happiness may be affected thereby" (and he stopped for a moment, evidently with emotion he wished to hide). "Let me ask you how is it that, so well instructed as you have been in your Bible, you can place any trust in these outward forms and ceremonies, which, by your early attendance in church, and that in one undeniably Puseyite, I am justified in believing? What can have allured you from the simple views you used to hold of the gospel plan of salvation, to adopt those fallacious notions of works

having any part or share in the matter? If what I am saying offends you, let the recollection of our early friendship excuse me to you."

"Oh, no, indeed, my dear Arthur, let me assure you I am anything but offended; on the contrary, I am much obliged by your candour, and I must ask you to judge me indulgently. You know that on the continent we have been so long deprived of our Church services, that the pleasure is great to me to be permitted the full exercise of the 'Morning Prayers,' which I will acknowledge are very essential to me, particularly as we have nothing of the kind in my father's house; but, independently of this, I do not consider that it is contrary at all to Scripture—the observance of fasts and festivals, the disuse of which has led our church into such laxity of practice, that since I have been of an age to judge for myself, the Church of England has been, in my mind, very ill-supported with her ministers, who have been, in too many instances, only mere professors, making it solely their profession for her revenues and emoluments, and dishonouring their Master's cause by coldness and indifference. I must believe that this system was and is intended only to revive her spiritual fervour, and bring back our Church to its primitive condition of order and discipline, which it had altogether lost, and not to build on any other foundation save Christ himself. I, at least, read it so, and if you can and will be so good as to show

me that I am wrong, I will not refuse to listen to your reasoning, nor will I resist the convictions you may be enabled to produce."

"Well, then, I will devote my first leisure to this object; and, in the meanwhile, let me ask you to read this little book, and let me have your opinion of it when I next have the pleasure of meeting you."

So saying they parted; Marion, however, first assuring Arthur Vivian she would very attentively peruse it, and give it her serious consideration.

CHAPTER XXIX.

"A feigned religion, that with fitting arts
Infernally, for each expression finds
Some flatt'ring counterpart, or creed, or charm;
'Tis man's religion from the root of sin."

ANON.

ON Marion's return to Everton, she found Edith out; she had accompanied Miss Vivian and some of her party in a ramble through the beautifully laid out grounds of their demesne. Poor Marion! she would gladly have found her cousin upon her return, as she had so much to tell her; but, as it was, she took the first chair that offered, untied her bonnet and shawl, and endeavoured to go over the recent conversation she had had with Arthur Vivian, in which she had, notwithstanding his efforts to conceal it, discovered, and with real pleasure, that *he* was not wholly indifferent to her.

"Well, it is all right that I have been candid with him," she said to herself; "he will not think the worse of me for it, or for not seeing things exactly the way he does; but I fear my opinions may have an unfavourable influence, as I am sure he would

not marry any one who differed materially with him on religious matters; I could not deceive him; and if, on the serious consideration he has requested me to give this little book, I find that my present opinions are not what I *now* think them, and that I can honestly tell him so, who knows" . . . .

She was about to open the said little book, when her cousin gently opened the door.

"So here you are, dear; I wondered what had become of you. Have you been long returned, dear Marion?" enquired Edith.

"No, not *very* long," replied her cousin; "but I was beginning to wish you were here, I have so much to relate to you."

"Well, *I* am delighted, dearest," rejoined Edith, after her cousin had finished her communication; "I know, very well, that Arthur Vivian is really attached to you; and I am sure that you will yet see how truly superior his views are to those erroneous teachings of the Puseyite clergy; and *he* will yet see, on his side, that his dear Marion (nay, do not be angry) is only a *little* High Church, not from either obstinacy or *conviction*, but from the want of seeing better for yourself, dearest, *who* are the enemies and *who* the true supporters of the Church of England. What a cold service it was this morning," she continued; "so very different to Mr. Vivian's beautiful prayer last night. Did you not

observe Mr. Priestley's prayers were wholly made up of Collects? Now, much as I admire our Book of Common Prayer, and its sweet collection of Collects, they were, I am sure, intended principally for the congregation, and not for private use, when our approach to God should be more in a filial and endearing way; the interests of the home circle especially remembered at the throne of grace.

"There is much truth in what you say, certainly, dear Edith; and I must admit that Arthur spoke very beautifully, too, to-day, on the same subject. Those chaunts were, however, very beautiful that Lady Ethell sang to-night, were they not, Edith? She has a beautiful voice. But tell me, have you observed a most unpleasant expression in Mr. Priestly's eye? a sort of wildness I never recollect having seen *in* him before."

"Oh! my dear Marion, it is too remarkable to pass any one's observation; and I believe it was Mr. Sandford who I heard telling my aunt the most extraordinary things and extravagancies he committed at Rome, very recently. He even went so far as to say, that he believed him decidedly favourable to the Roman Catholic faith; and had been heard to express his opinion that there was, after all (if things were as *he* would have them), but very little difference between the Church of Rome and that of England. These are the men, Marion, who do the Established Church so much harm, pretending to build her up."

Marion did not reply; but that evening Edith remarked with pleasure, that her cousin took her Bible for her evening meditation, and that *The Imitation of Jesus* was not referred to, though it occupied its accustomed place on her table.

CHAPTER XXX.

> "Where is the heart unmoved by more than glee?
> Where is the eye that kindles not to see
> That spot where first our beam of life began,
> And youth put on the energies of man?
>
> R. MONTGOMERY.

"WELL, Edith, have you been waiting long?" said a gentleman, whose bearing and appearance proclaimed him to be a man of some rank and importance, whilst his manner of addressing the very pretty, lady-like girl, waiting for him at the station of ———, appeared to intimate some relationship between them. "It is now three o'clock, and the train leaves in about five minutes. I have secured our places. We had, I think, better take our seats at once." And Lord Grey (for it was no other than himself) offered his daughter his arm as he spoke.

Edith turned aside to give some directions to the maid, who, as a protection, had been staying beside her, and then put her arm in that of her father's.

"We have waited little more than ten minutes at most, I think, papa," said Edith, as they walked away. "I hope you left Lady Grey as well as you are looking yourself," winningly enquired Edith, trying, if possible, to obtain a smile from her father.

But Lord Grey's stern countenance rarely relaxed into a smile, and at this moment his thoughts were intent only upon the carriage in which he had secured their seats, and did not even know that Edith had expected him to smile.

Though the crowd was great, and the train about to start, every one hurrying to and fro in great confusion, Lord Grey found speedily their carriage. He handed Edith in, and placed himself opposite to her. There was now breathing time, and he seemed at length to recollect for the first time that he had not seen his child for some while; that it was *his* child who sat there before him; and whether the reminiscences which her excessive likeness to her mother recalled, or the pride he felt in Edith's great beauty, his manner warmed, and in his turn he enquired for her aunt and Sir James Fitzwilliam.

"You are looking remarkably well, I declare, Edith!"

"There you return my compliment, papa. I ventured to enquire just now for Lady Grey, whom I hope you left as well as I am glad to see you are looking yourself."

"Oh, yes, yes! We shall reach Gainsborough late this evening, so you must prepare for a long journey."

"It was very good of you to come for me yourself, and a very great pleasure to me that I am going to stay with you, and live at home;" and she looked at her father as she spoke; but his lordship had en-

sconced himself comfortably in the corner of his seat, and having opened his *Morning Post*, was too much buried in its contents to hear even his daughter's last words. Edith therefore drew from her pretty work-basket, Marion's gift, *Longfellow's Poems*, and to a casual observer appeared as much interested in her book as her father was in his paper; but, in truth, her thoughts had reverted to Paington Abbey, so long her home, and those so dear *there* to her, who that morning she had taken leave of, and that perhaps for a long while. How strange it appeared to her, that though she was going home she was going amongst strangers. True, she was with her own father, her only remaining parent; but she knew nothing of him — comparatively nothing. The past—the future—presented themselves swiftly to her imagination; and Everton, too, with the admiration she had there excited, with sundry vague ideas, too vague to rest upon, but which nevertheless passed in rapid succession through her mind.

The journey was tedious, and appeared still longer as the short day closed in a little after five o'clock. Lord Grey laid aside his paper, being unable to see, exclaiming—

"Well, Edith, we have still three or four hours. They will be giving us light soon, I suppose; the days become now abominably short."

Another hour—and yet another passed on, and Edith *did* begin to feel very tired. She was roused up, however, from a little dose, into which fatigue

and constant motion had lulled her, by the entrance of a gentleman (at a station where the train stopped unusually long), somewhat past the middle age, of a singularly sweet and benevolent countenance, whose dress bespoke him to be a clergyman.

"Ah! how do you do, Livingstone?" exclaimed Lord Grey, as he extended cordially his hand. "So we are to be fellow-travellers for the rest of our way, I presume—that's right, to Gainsborough, eh?"

"You are quite correct, my lord. I am on my way back to my parish, and my Parsonage, having just deposited my boy Cecil at Cambridge. Miss Trevor, I conclude?" continued Mr. Livingstone, looking with pleasure at Edith, who, on her side, was equally pleased to meet one she had long wished to know.

"Yes," replied Lord Grey. "Edith, I must introduce to you one of my oldest friends."

Mr. Livingstone extended his hand to Edith, who returned with warmth the kind pressure of his hand.

"You must remember my daughter," resumed his lordship, "though she cannot know you."

"I am happy, indeed, to see and know Miss Trevor; and I hope she will permit me, as a very old friend," he continued, addressing Edith, "to have the pleasure of seeing you at the Parsonage. Mrs. Livingstone and my daughter preserve a very faithful recollection of you, Miss Trevor, I assure you, and will be delighted to see you."

Edith assured Mr. Livingstone it would please her very much to make their acquaintance, and added that she would not fail to pay them an early visit. Not a little drawn towards one who, she had ever learned from Budd, had been so prized and esteemed a friend of her own much-loved mother (for whom every person and thing connected with *her* had the greatest interest for Edith). There was something cheering in the idea of meeting in Minnie Livingstone an acquaintance that might prove congenial to her, in the absence of her dear companion and cousin, Marion Fitzwilliam. She therefore promised herself much pleasure in renewing her early friendship with her, though Miss Livingstone was somewhat older than herself.

Edith and her father reached Gainsborough Castle very late in the evening. She was welcomed by Lady Grey with as much kindness as could be expected of so passive and quiet a person. Tea over, she proposed herself to show Edith to her room, remarking that after so long and fatiguing a journey she must be tired, and probably glad to retire soon to rest.

It was impossible not to be pleased with Lady Grey's arrangement of the little suite of rooms allotted to her, consisting of a bed-room, pretty dressing-room, and boudoir adjoining; and Edith could not be insensible to Lady Grey's very kind and evident desire to please her in the gratification of all her tastes.

"I have had this little boudoir papered afresh for you, Edith, since you were here;" and pointing to a very pretty piano of polished rosewood, beautifully inlaid, "you must accept of this as a present from myself."

"How very good of you, my dear Lady Grey; it is a most acceptable gift, and one I value greatly. The paper, too, is exquisitely chosen."

"I am very glad, my dear Edith, you like what has been done. I will now leave you," she added, in her peculiarly quiet way, "and wish you good night;" so saying, and gently imprinting a kiss on her forehead, she left the room.

And now Edith had leisure to survey her apartment, the whole arrangement of which she could not but admire. A bright fire burned on the hearth, and a most luxuriously comfortable arm-chair looked so inviting she threw herself into it, and indulged in a long train of thought. She was once more in her father's house, at home again, and for good! She had but recently understood that, as Lord Grey's daughter, and an only child, she was a person of some importance; but unlike many, who, with this consciousness, in Edith's situation, would have had their minds full of all the follies and vanities such a position might be calculated to permit them the exercise of, and indulgence in, *her* reflections were of a very different nature. With the conviction of this newly acquired position came the reflection (for hers was a religious and a thinking

mind) of the vast responsibilities which were attached to her affluence, and influence, necessarily following, added to the most earnest desire to employ both to the praise and glory of Him whose gifts they were, and by whose particular providence it was that *her* lot was so cast.

Edith at length rose from her comfortable seat to summon her maid, when her attention was attracted to what she thought had been a book-case in a dark recess in the room. By a slight movement of her figure, in going to ring the bell, she discovered it was a curtain. Her joy was great, on drawing it aside, to find it was a beautifully executed picture of her mother, the late Lady Grey, as a young woman, exquisitely painted. It represented her in her favourite occupation—reading, and that—her Bible. There was a calm in the attitude, with one hand laid on the open portion of the Sacred Volume—which occupied her attention—the other gently supporting her head, whilst the eyes, so full of thought and feeling, beamed, as it were, with interest on the subject she had been perusing, which was very interesting to Edith as she stood before it.

"My dear, dear mother!" and her eyes filled with tears; "How often has poor nurse Budd told me of your sweet piety, and earnest wish that your child then (when that was done)—your darling should love and know the value of that Book, so prized by you. Your prayers have been heard, my sweet mother. Edith desires to walk in your steps,

to imitate you in every way, and from henceforth will only redouble her efforts to render herself worthy of being called your child."

So saying, she gently drew the little blue curtain across the lovely picture.

Her maid now answered her mistress's summons, and Edith prepared to undress and retire to bed. Dismissing the servant, she fell on her knees with uplifted heart to the Giver of all Good, to thank her heavenly Father for his many mercies towards her—especially for giving her, in the relation of a step-mother (chosen by Lord Grey quite irrespective of any consideration for his daughter), a person so apparently well-disposed towards her—for dispersing the clouds which would have overshadowed her return to the parental roof, had it been otherwise, and for giving her the promise of much sunshine. How little did Edith know the envy *that* sunshine would excite in thousands towards her!

CHAPTER XXXI.

"A life of pleasure is a dream fulfilled
That fades in acting; as a gorgeous cloud,
E'en as it dazzles, is but dying air."

ANON.

"AND you are going, dear mamma—you are really going to the embassy on Thursday next?"

"Yes, my love, I am intending to do so; and take you also. Sir Frederick Elmsley, our ambassador, is so very old a friend of your father's, it is an inducement. I am told their parties are very pleasant, especially for young people. I hope you will therefore enjoy this little gaiety."

"As to that, we know so few people, I can hardly expect it; for to make going-out really enjoyable we should know a great many, dear mamma," returned Mildred Vernon, as she and her mother sat as usual in their sunny sitting-room, in the cheerful Rue de ———, at their accustomed occupations. "But you, dearest mother, who do not like going out at all into the gay world (though I cannot say that I see, myself, anything wrong in doing so), why should you tax yourself to do what is most disagreeable to you, when I do not even care about it."

"Because, Mildred," returned Mrs. Vernon, "I feel it to be my duty to take you out when I can. I wish you moderately to mix in the world, that you may be able, from your own experience and conviction, to judge of the nothingness of that against which your Bible warns you, but which your young imagination leads you to form such brilliant expectation. God's grace has long since brought me to see the world's dangerous snares, and the emptiness and insufficiency of everything in it. But this I do not expect of you, my dear child, though I know there are those who may condemn me for allowing you to make the essay; still I repeat that I would like you to judge for yourself; and as you tell me you see no harm in it, I do not fear its influence upon you."

"Will Lady Hamilton be there, do you think, mamma? Is she going on Tuesday?"

"I am not sure that she is; and, indeed, my love, having so few acquaintances here, it is a great chance if we meet any friends. Your father's reverse of fortune, you know, Mildred, has made him very shy of making new acquaintances; and, as we are quite unable to receive or entertain the world, we have not much claim on society."

Further conversation between mother and daughter was here interrupted by the entrance of Mr. Vernon.

"Here is a letter from Eaton Square, from your sister Catherine, if I mistake not, Isabella," said he,

as he handed his wife one from several he held in his hand.

"Yes, indeed," replied Mrs. Vernon, as she hastily broke the seal; "I hope, dear, yours are not unpleasant ones;" and she glanced at her husband's countenance with her usual anxiety, as she observed he was now very intently engaged in the contents of one which did not appear to her to be particularly pleasant.

"Nothing new, nothing new," said Mr. Vernon, as he left the room; "but I shall be glad of your company presently, *alone*."

"Well, Mildred," said her mother, when again alone, and she had done reading Lady Vansittart's letter, "my sister writes me a full account of the wedding, which took place in town.

"Emmeline's, you mean, mamma?"

"Yes, my love, your cousin's. I am rather astonished that she has not apprised me of it herself; but probably, as we were abroad, and she had a good deal to do preparatory to this event, she deputed my sister to do it for her. They are going to Scotland immediately, where Mr. Tudor has relations."

Mildred would have liked much to have asked her mother about Allyne, and the party at Everton, the recent events, and visitors who had been staying there (for Augusta Clifford's conversation, and hint about Edith Trevor, the lovely heiress, were yet fresh in her mind); but as her mother made no

allusion to him, or anything else, she tried to follow her valuable advice (given when they had last conversed on the subject), and let that painful train of thought cease. Mrs. Vivian was called away, and Mildred wisely occupied herself busily finishing an exquisite painting of Coreggio's, which had been lent to her from the Prince d'Aremberg's Gallery of Paintings.

Tuesday came, the eventful night of Mildred's *debut.* Dressed in her pretty white *Tarlatane à double jupe,* her beautiful hair simply arranged in *bandeaux,* with white camelia, tastefully disposed, she looked really lovely. On entering the room where her father was, murmuring not a little at the annoyance of having to dress and go out, she was greeted with rather an unusual compliment from him (and consequently the more pleasing to her) upon her looking so very well. Poor Mrs. Vernon! how variously different and conflicting were her feelings as she gazed, with maternal pride, on her child, about to enter, for the first time, into an ill-natured world, looking more than usually pretty, with all the addition dress invariably (when in good taste) gives to real beauty, so ill calculated to meet the envy and malice, which too surely follows and surrounds a pretty girl, if her fortunes are but very modest, and that she is unsupported with friends. Mildred, her darling child, had such a warm and innocent heart, contented with so little, provided that little was in accordance with the exquisite

refinement and delicacy of taste she possessed. If Mrs. Vernon could have ordered her daughter's lot, how she would have spared her all the mortifications she knew, as well as disappointments that were, she feared, before her, from their untoward circumstances and clouded fortunes. How often had she secretly wished that her husband could have entered more fully into her maternal feelings with regard to Mildred; that she could have made him less opposed to a little society in a quiet, rational way, suited to their reduced circumstances, she would have been perfectly satisfied. But from the aversion Mr. Vernon had to anything like intrusion on his habits (which were selfish, almost without his being aware of it), and isolated, therefore, as was the life they led, Mrs. Vernon felt there was but one way for her to act, and this was to avail herself of the very fortunate circumstance which the English Ambassador at B., being a very old and personal friend of Mr. Vernon's, afforded her of introducing Mildred, under these favourable auspices. To this her dear child was, by no means, averse. Mildred was not yet *converted;* and her mother was too sensibly aware, from her own Christian experience, that though *she* might sow and plant, God alone could give the increase. She had planted, she *had* "Cast the bread upon the waters," and she doubted not the promise that she should "find it after many days."

The reception at the Embassy was an unusually

brilliant one. It was the first of the season, and there was no small assemblage of rank and fashion, as well as beauty. Mr. and Mrs. Vernon and Mildred were as kindly received as it was possible by Sir F. and Lady Elmsley; but the crowd was very great, and both were too much occupied with the reception of their numerous guests to do more than say a few complimentary things.

Mrs. Vernon, with her daughter, took a seat in a somewhat quiet place, in one of the rooms of the magnificent *suite* thrown open on the occasion. Here Mr. Vernon left them to see if he knew any one among the vast assemblage of all nations. It was a novel scene to Mildred, as one after another passed before her. She was greatly admired, though she knew it not, and could not help wishing for her father's return, that she might walk with him through the rooms, and survey the beautiful paintings that adorned its walls. Whilst anxiously expecting him, she heard a well-known voice address her mother.

"Oh! how do you do, Mrs. Vernon? and Mildred, *you* here! I thought *you* never would go out. This is a charming turn in affairs."

Augusta Clifford, for it was no other that thus spoke to Mrs. Vernon, was accompanied by her cousin, Captain Lindley of the Guards, and another young man, who appeared much struck with Mildred's beauty.

"Mrs. Clifford is here, I presume," said Mrs.

Vernon, in return to Miss Clifford's amiable greeting (without noticing the tone of irony she thought she perceived discernible towards her daughter).

"Oh, yes! mamma is here, with Lady Hamilton; but I have lost them, and am making my way to find them, as well as I can through this odious crowd. Your are most fortunate in having secured so quiet a place, and a seat, too."

So saying, with an approving smile, and a nod to Mildred, Augusta Clifford passed on.

"What a pretty friend you have there, Augusta," observed her cousin. Who is she?"

"May I ask her name, Miss Clifford?" enquired the Hon. Brooke de Vere, Captain Lindley's companion, to whom Augusta had been recently introduced. "She is remarkably pretty!"

"Miss Vernon is her name. She *is* pretty," replied Augusta, endeavouring to conceal her annoyance at Mr. de Vere's *very* open admiration of her; "I am surprised to see her here to-night, as they rarely go out. Mrs. Vernon is what you call *very good!*"

"By which term, I suppose Miss Clifford means *serious?*" rejoined Mr. de Vere.

"Yes," said Augusta, laughing; "Mrs. Vernon, and I believe her daughter, think it sinful in the extreme to go out *at all* in what is called the world. For my own part, *I* think such conclusions are most uncharitable, and are often excuses, after all,

for other better reasons. The Vernons are badly off, and know very few people here."

Mr. de Vere made no reply; while Captain Lindley observed—

"Serious or not, Miss Vernon *was* a monstrous pretty recluse."

Mr. Vernon now joined his daughter; and, giving her his arm, proposed to take her through the different rooms.

"You would prefer remaining here, dearest mamma?" enquired Mildred of her mother; "are you quite sure you do not mind being left alone?"

"By no means, my love; go with your father. I prefer sitting quietly here."

Mildred obeyed, and they were soon lost in the crowd. Exceedingly fond of good paintings, she was very much pleased with several to which her father directed her attention. Mr. Vernon shook hands and bowed to a stray acquaintance who he met, here and there, as they went on; but Mildred soon perceived that he was *gêneed* in the extreme; and, with her wonted amiability, proposed that they should go home; to which her father readily assented, delighted at the proposition being made by herself, and wholly unmindful that it was made solely to please him.

They had nearly reached Mrs. Vernon, on their return, when they were met by Sir Frederick Elmsley, with Mr. de Vere.

"My dear Vernon," said the Ambassador, ac-

costing him, "you remember Lord Camhay, years ago, when we were at college? Let me introduce you to his son, Mr. de Vere, he is anxious to make your acquaintance;" and, so saying, he moved on.

Mr. Vernon returned the introductory bow somewhat stiffly, his daughter thought; and muttering something scarcely audible, about its being, indeed, a long time since he had the pleasure of meeting his father, Lord Camhay, &c. The introduction over, he would gladly have passed on, forgetting entirely that the young man *might* have wished to know Mildred, or of the advantage it *might* have been to her to make the acquaintance. Without any cause or reason for it, he was the victim of a certain *mauvaise honte*, which prevented his ever feeling at ease in society. He never could get over the idea that, being no longer the rich man and proprietor of his late magnificent property, Ivy Tower, that he must be a mere cypher in the eyes of the world; and his pride greatly rebelling at the notion of such a thing—he preferred shutting himself up, and avoiding society altogether—thus forgetting the claims (and imperative ones too) that his only child had on him. Mr. de Vere was not disposed to leave the new acquaintance he had made, however; and lingering on, by the time Mr. Vernon had made several enquiries for his family, many of whom he had not met for years, they reached Mrs. Vernon, to whom her husband presented Mr. de Vere, who very kindly received him, and they conversed a little

while, on various topics, till Mrs. Vernon rose to retire, observing that their carriage must be in waiting. Mr. de Vere offered his arm, and Mildred and her father followed.

"I shall do myself the pleasure of calling on you, with your permission, to-morrow," said the young man, as he handed Mrs. Vernon into the carriage, and afterwards her daughter. Wishing them good night at the door, he asked Mr. Vernon the number of his house in the Rue de ———."

"Ninety-one," he replied; "we shall be happy to see you."

Mr. de Vere bowed, and, with a look of unmistakable admiration at Mildred, he re-entered the Embassy.

CHAPTER XXXII.

"Home of the Christian! a scene of heaven
In miniature art thou!
Where all is redolent of charms divine,
Tempers renewed, and souls by grace becalmed."
MONTGOMERY.

"MISS LIVINGSTONE has been here, my dear Edith, during your absence," said Lady Grey to her step-daughter, as the latter entered the drawing-room from a solitary walk she had been taking one fine afternoon through their beautiful grounds.

"I am very sorry I should have missed Minnie," replied Edith; "I have been paying Budd a visit. Hearing she had been ill, I went to see her. Was Minnie alone?"

"No, she was accompanied by her father, Mr. Livingstone. They came to consult me about the school-feast; but you know, my dear Edith, I am so thoroughly unacquainted with anything of the kind, I could only promise you, as my deputy, and contribute, which I will do with the greatest pleasure, but you must tell me what my donation ought to be. You must go to the Rectory to-morrow morning, and explain my utter ignorance of these matters. Mr. Livingstone is so good a man, I should be sorry

to offend him; and you can promise anything you l ke, in my name."

Edith smiled.

"My dear Lady Grey, you are very kind; and I am sure Mr. and Mrs. Livingstone will feel exceedingly your liberality."

"I think," interrupted her step-mother, "they said it was for Easter, which will be just before we go to town. Easter falls early this year. By-the-bye, Edith," continued Lady Grey, somewhat archly, "Mr. Livingstone does not, I think, *quite approve* of your going out—I mean, in the world."

"Oh! did Mr. Livingstone speak of that?" asked Edith, with something of eagerness in her tone, whilst the colour mounted to her cheek, unperceived, however, by Lady Grey.

"Yes," good-humouredly replied her ladyship, "we had quite a conversation upon the world and its follies; he is a good, excellent man, and I esteem him very much, but we do not at all see things in the same light, at least as far as mixing in the world is concerned. We are as yet but slightly acquainted with each other, my dear Edith," continued Lady Grey, as she laid down her pretty work, and for the first time looked up at her step-daughter; "but tell me what are your ideas on this point? Young as you are, I dare say you have an opinion."

"I am afraid," Edith replied, "you will think me absurd; but I have been taught to take the same views with regard to the pleasures of the

world as Mr. Livingstone, and am so convinced of the truth of that word in the Bible which says of it, 'for all that is of the world—the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of life—is not of the Father, but is of the world'—that, do you know, dear Lady Grey," added Edith, with increased warmth, "I would infinitely prefer staying at Gainsborough, whilst you and my father are in London, than go to all the gay doings and balls of the season."

Lady Grey might have felt surprised, but she did not show it.

"Not at all absurd, Edith; I asked you for your opinion, and you have given it," returned Lady Grey, with her quiet decision of manner. If you ask me whether I could or would consent to ask your father for his sanction to remain behind during our absence, I candidly tell you, No; I consider you too young and unacquainted with the world you condemn, to be able to judge justly and fairly of it. I wish conscientiously, on my side, to do my part by you, and therefore would rather you delayed your decision against entering into that world which your position entitles you to live in, without, at all events, giving it a fair trial. I am not one of those who would either wish to bias your judgment or enslave your conscience, but I am no advocate for a young person embracing ideas not really their own. If, after making a proper trial of the world and its attractions this season, you can honestly assure me that you still maintain your present ideas, I shall certainly not

oppose you; nay, I will do more—I will endeavour to persuade your father to leave you to your quietude for the future."

Edith felt there was much kindness in what Lady Grey said; and though she felt that her own feelings were those of conviction, and not merely the borrowed opinions of others she was taking for her own, she had too much humility, as well as distrust of her own strength, to say more than that she hoped to be able always to please her amiable step-mother, and her father also.

The following morning, breakfast over, Edith repaired early to the Rectory. Mrs. Livingstone was engaged with some of her husband's poor parishioners when Edith called. It was Mrs. Livingstone's day for receiving those who might wish to speak to her or had wants to be supplied, at her own house—for she was a very pattern of what a clergyman's wife should be.

Edith, therefore, found Minnie alone, and on the very point of starting for the infant school.

"We can go there together," said Edith; "I am on my way to Nurse Budd, my dear Minnie; but, having a message from Lady Grey to your father, I called early, in the hope of finding him at home. I was so sorry not to have seen him and yourself, when you called yesterday."

"And my father *is* happily at home, dearest Edith, and would regret indeed not to have been so. My mother only will lose this pleasure, for this is

her 'poor-woman' day, and she will not be disengaged till very late in the afternoon."

"I thought I heard Miss Trevor's voice," said Mr. Livingstone, as the good rector opened the door of the room in which Edith and his daughter were sitting; "and her visits are now so rare to us. I came to share Minnie's great pleasure—seeing *you;*" extending, as he spoke, his hand cordially to Edith, and adding politely his enquiries for Lord and Lady Grey.

"They are both quite well, thank you," returned Edith, as she rose with pleasure to meet Mr. Livingstone; and, relating the purport of her early visit, to which she added her own regrets not to have seen as much of them of late as she wished, she presented him with her step-mother's kind gift of a £5 note. "I am so glad," she continued, "that the school-feast is fixed for Easter, so that I shall not lose it. We leave Gainsborough for London immediately after the vacation."

"So Lady Grey told us yesterday; indeed, we had a somewhat lengthened conversation," rejoined the good man. "Perhaps, too, you may possibly have been told that no less a person than yourself formed one of the chief topics of our discourse, my dear young friend. *I* venture to take a very deep interest in you, honoured as I was with the valued friendship and intimate confidence of your own dear mother, whose life on earth was a singular instance of love and devotion to her Saviour. I could not

hear of your being about to enter into all the dissipation of a London life without a word of warning, which, in my ministerial office, might be forgiven, even should it give offence."

"Indeed it gave no offence, dear Mr. Livingstone," replied Edith, whilst a bright colour suffused her cheeks as she spoke. "Lady Grey repeated to me all that you said, and I am so pleased that you did speak. It is so kind of you to take such deep interest in my spiritual welfare, for poor mamma's sake" . . . . these last words were said slowly and mournfully . . . . "I wanted so very much to ask you a question. Do you think that, in some cases, it is incompatible with one's Christian profession to enter the world?"

"The Bible, my dear Miss Trevor, "lays down but one plain rule for us to follow. We are therein desired 'not to be conformed to this world, but to be transformed by the renewing of the mind, that we may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.' *This* very directly tells us, with very many other texts, such as, 'love not the world, neither the things that are in the world, the pride of life,' etc., etc., that the world, and intercourse with the world and the worldly, must be dangerous to us—to our souls; and you know, we are only journeying through this wilderness, after all. They, therefore, must be our first consideration; just as, on a journey, we care for and occupy ourselves about what will most refresh our bodies,

so we must avoid all that shall weaken our spiritual growth, or endanger it. When you ask me, therefore, my dear young friend, whether in some cases a person professing to be a sincere follower of Christ may still enter the world without calling their sincerity in question, I should say, as a *general* rule, decidedly not. But there may be, unquestionably, some cases where the young Christian may, when circumstances, position, or duty makes the requirement, even glorify her Master in doing so; in other words, where the Cross accompanies the compliance."

"I am very happy to hear what you have said," said Edith, her animated countenance assuming a more than usual bright and happy expression. "In my own case, I can with perfect sincerity say that, if I were permitted to have my own choice, I should much prefer to avoid the world, with all its pleasures, altogether. I have been early taught, in God's gracious providence, to see much vanity and folly in all worldly pursuits and worldly intercourse. But it is very difficult," continued Edith, "to put one's opinion in opposition to those we live with, who we may not only wish to please, but be called to obey; and this is my difficulty."

"I am rejoiced, truly, my dear Miss Trevor, to find that you view these things in the way that you do; few things could have given me greater pleasure," rejoined the good pastor, "and I do not hesitate to repeat again, that when duty calls you to make

the sacrifice, and to go into the world, which, by God's grace and goodness, you are led to feel indifferent to, you may do so, and look equally for his blessing; but only watch over your young heart, so deceitful and ensnaring. Guard well against the smallest inclination to make earth your resting-place. Your position in society is a high one; your responsibilities will be great. But in this trial, as well as in every other, look up to Him who appoints us our lot, and bids us adorn the station He has called us to fill. Pray to Him earnestly to be enlightened in every difficulty and fear not."

"I am glad we have had this conversation," replied Edith, rising to take her leave; I shall often recall it to my mind, and think of your advice, dear Mr. Livingstone. During our absence, I beg you to remember me in your prayers sometimes."

"That you may be well assured of, not only for your own sake, but for hers whose memory is so very sweet to me. I can never forget your dear mother's first and foremost desire," continued Mr. Livingstone, "that you, her precious child, should, in all sincerity, become the faithful disciple of the Saviour, and I do hope and believe, that her prayers for you, then, have been answered."

He now shook hands warmly with Edith, and both herself and his daughter Minnie proceeded on their way together. As Miss Livingstone and her companion reached the pretty infant school, which was built by Edith's mother, loud acclamations from

the juvenile party, assembled in their spacious playground, greeted their arrival.

Minnie Livingstone was an old favourite with the children; and Edith, during her stay at Gainsborough (a period of nearly three months or more), had, by a constant attendance, and gentle winning ways, won many a young infant's heart.

It was with difficulty that they disengaged themselves from the embraces of the various little ruddy-faced ones, who clung to them in their childish glee, as they forced their way through the little crowd to the school-room.

"Play away!" said Edith, "play away!" as she disentangled herself from one of her little favourites, "Charley shall come *another* day, and spell when play-hour is over."

They now entered the school-room and conversed with the school-mistress upon the arrangements for the coming feast.

Edith's earliest recollections were connected with this school; she could remember, when quite a child, coming with her sweet mamma to this pretty little edifice; and there was something to her so sacred in *it*, as well as the little old church of Gainsborough! The family pew there, too, in which she well recollected her mother's corner, where she used to sit, and her own little seat beside her—painfully sweet were these faithful reminiscences to Edith Trevor.

"How very pleasant it is, dear Edith, to us,"

said Minnie, as they left the infant school together, "to find that you like good things, and schools, and all these country matters. When first you were expected, after Lord and Lady Grey's return, we were very busy wondering and thinking whether you might not be quite above taking an interest in our village concerns, and we are so delighted to see that you are quite otherwise."

"Oh! it is such a pleasure to do good," returned Edith, "that I can never understand the apathy which some people, who have not only the means, but health and faculties, often display about this most pleasurable duty; and my dear Minnie, when I think of the many blessings and mercies God has showered upon myself, it is the very least I can do, as far as I can, to teach others the love of their Saviour, and to lend my helping hand to any useful work of charity, such as your good father promotes amongst the poor around him."

They had now reached a neat row of alms-houses, founded by the first Lady Grey, built in the Elizabethan style of architecture, with remarkably pretty gardens in front of each. They were, in themselves, truly ornamental and picturesque. Nurse Budd, who, my reader will no doubt remember, in the commencement of my story, was our heroine's faithful attendant and nurse, occupied the prettiest of them.

"I thought I should see you, my darling," said the faithful creature, as Edith, with her usual sweet-

ness of manner and condescension, entered her pretty cottage, and gave her the accustomed embrace.

"You know I promised you, nurse, to come and see you to day, and I never break my word," she added, with a sweet smile, "and now tell me, how are you?"

"Better, my dear Miss Edith; it is such a pleasure to see your dear face, and looking so well. It does me always so much good to see you! And who was that you parted with at the gate, Miss Edith?" enquired Budd.

"Minnie Livingstone, my good nurse, my old play-fellow, Minnie."

"Aye, yes, yes, Mrs. Livingstone's daughter; they remind me of nice days, long since gone bye. Oh! how many's the time I've wished them back again! Mrs. Livingstone was very kind to me when you were last away, my darling; she knew your own dear mamma, and loved her—ah! who could help loving her?—and there you sit the very living image of herself!"

"Well, nurse, that reminds me of something I had to say to you. Have you ever seen the beautiful picture I have got of my own dear mamma, which Lady Grey moved most kindly into my room before I came home? I want you to tell me if it is like her, as I intend taking it with me to London; and before I go you must come and stay a whole afternoon with me, that is, when you are better; it is a long time since you have been to the castle."

"Ah! my darling, what have I to do there? returned the old woman; "Nurse Budd is better at home. When I thought you, my own dear Miss Edith, would have lived with his lordship all alone there, until you should get married—ah! then I did love to think of the dear place, and I'd have liked to have lived and died there; but now there's another that has her dear ladyship's place, I don't care to go among them. But I always thought and said as much. So as they don't put my darling against her old nurse, I don't mind."

"Oh! nurse, nurse, but this is very naughty! Indeed, indeed I thought you were quite getting over your old prejudices; nobody could or would wish to put me against, as you say, my dear faithful nurse; you know *that* very well. Lady Grey greatly respects you, likes to see you, and frequently wonders you do not come to the Castle. You must not wrong any one by such very unworthy thoughts; it is not Christian, indeed it is not. I love you dearly for loving my poor mamma, my good nurse, but you must not forget papa either; he had a right to please himself; and Lady Grey is a very good and amiable woman, and most kind to me."

"Well, my darling Miss Edith, don't you be angry with nurse; she is growing an old woman every day, likes the old times, and the old ways, and can't get to like the new. The picture at the Castle is as like as possibly can be to my own dear, dear mistress—your angel mother, Miss Edith, and

you are as like to her as ever creature was. She used to talk to me so beautifully! And you are going to London, darling? Well, that's all right; they don't forget your rights, I like that—and you'll see the great world; though my dear Lady—your mamma—used to speak so against it. Oh, if she'd seen only how pretty her sweet child had grown up!"

"Yes, my dear, good nurse, we are going, it is too true, to town after Easter; and, do you know that I do not like going there at all? I am like *dearest* mamma, not fond of the world no more than she was. Nay, don't look so sad; I am not the less happy or merry because of that. Do you remember dear Miss Sinclair at Paington, how she always said that religion made everybody happy and cheerful, or else it was not *true* or real religion?"

"Oh! do I not well remember her, and the Miss Fitzwilliams—Miss Marion's sweet, kind face! Yes, yes; and tell me, Miss Edith, how does Miss Marion get on?"

"I had a letter from her yesterday. She has not been very well, nurse; and is going shortly to pay Mrs. Vivian a visit at Summerfield. Sir James and my aunt are going to the Isle of Wight again this summer. But nurse, I must be soon taking my leave; so, before I do so, we will have our usual little chapter in the Bible;" and Edith rose to reach from a shelf at hand a large Bible, the gift of her own mother to Budd years before.

Edith was sincerely attached to this friend of her early and motherless years; and she was more than anxious that she should, in her declining age, see the eternal and spiritual concerns of her soul in their true light; for, though Nurse Budd had always a great respect for religious truth, she was by no means vitally impressed. Ever since her return home, Edith had paid almost daily visits to Budd's little cottage; attachment to herself, and a wish to be of use in higher things, being her chief motive; and she made it a practice never to leave her without a word from the Book of Life. It was a pretty sight to see her, who was now growing in years, listening, with earnest affection, to every word of the child she had nursed as her own, grown up into the young, lovely woman, on whom Providence seemed to have lavished so largely every gift—beauty, wealth, rank."

"These are very sweet words to us all, dear nurse," said Edith, as she closed the Sacred Volume, after reading the beautiful 8th chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans: "'There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit;' but, you see, we must (it goes on to say) have the Spirit, otherwise we are *none* of His. They that are after the Spirit do mind the things of the Spirit, and they who are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh. I hope you are, dear nurse, giving your thoughts to these things. I never forget to

pray for you, that heavenly things, and not earthly ones only, may become your first concern. You know that it is love for you, Budd, which makes me speak;" and she looked with her winning smile at her faithful old servant.

"Do I not well know it, my darling?" returned nurse; "and doesn't every word you say delight me? You always were a thoughtful child, above your years, and took after her sweet ladyship, so good and pious; and you've turned out to her heart's wish, my darling. Never fear, Miss Edith, Budd *will* think on all the good things you have been reading to her, and talking about, depend on that; but you'll come again before you go? How I shall miss you when you are gone!" she continued, as she saw Edith about to take her leave.

"Yes, I shall not fail to come and see you almost every day whilst we remain; but, remember your promise—you must come one day this week to me at the Castle; so good-bye, for the present."

Nurse Budd gave assent, and, with another kiss, Edith left the cottage.

Nurse Budd was as good as her word; she did not fail to find her way to the Castle, and passed an afternoon with her darling. The school-feast, too, went off charmingly. Both Edith and Lady Grey assisted at it, to the delight of the children. Mr. and Mrs. Livingstone, with their daughter, Minnie, dined at Gainsborough Castle the evening before Lord and Lady Grey left for London, and

Edith and Miss Livingstone parted, mutually promising to be excellent correspondents.

"I shall be so anxious to know all the interesting details of home," said Edith; "and poor Budd, she will miss me. I am sure, dear Minnie, you will often see her, for my sake; and do not let my dear faithful old creature want for anything.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

"Even in the midst of Pleasure's mad career,
The mental monitor shall wake and weep."

MASON.

"WE must return Lady Hetherington and Lady Anne Effingham's visits, my dear Edith, and I purpose doing so this afternoon," said Lady Grey, to her step-daughter, about a week after they were comfortably established in Lord Grey's splendid new mansion in Belgrave-square, an acquisition he had very recently purchased. "I shall order the carriage at three o'clock."

"By that time," replied Edith, as she looked up from a little drawing she was doing, "I shall have completed this long-promised sketch of Gainsborough Castle for Marion Fitzwilliam. Louisa Vivian, Marion writes me, is staying for a day or two with her Aunt Hetherington on her way to Summerfield, and this will be a charming opportunity to send my drawing to her."

"You are already acquainted, my love, with Lady Hetherington and her daughters, I think?" enquired Lady Grey.

"Oh, yes, slightly," rejoined Edith; "as a child, I

remember, when living with my aunt and cousins, meeting Lady Ethell, before she married Mr. Priestley, at the Vivian's of Summerfield, and last autumn we passed a few days at Everton, where Lady Hetherington and two of the Lady Forsters were staying in the house at the time."

"But tell me, Edith," resumed Lady Grey, "are they not very religious?—have some particular views? Your father and Lord Hetherington are such old friends, and we are such near neighbours, he seems anxious that we should be on intimate terms."

"*Religious!* dear Lady Grey," said Edith, looking up for a moment from her drawing with much astonishment, "surely *not* religious?"

"Well, yes, indeed," returned her step-mother, "Lady Anne Effingham told me so the other day when she was with me (you were not at home); she said that Lady Hetherington was such an excellent person, to use her own terms, '*a most devoted woman*,' that she went to church morning and evening every day of the year, and a great deal more. Now, in my mind, I consider religious extravagance the worst of all enthusiasm, and you know, Edith, I think your *friend Mr. Livingstone*, carries things a little too far."

"Oh, dear Lady Grey, I think you will find that Lady Hetherington and Mr. Livingstone's religious views and feelings are wholly dissimilar. The high church party, to which I have always understood Lady Hetherington belongs, are highly enthusiastic. This is generally admitted; but, for my own part, I feel

true religion to be too deep a principle, when vital, to permit of any extravagant show evincing itself more in the daily, sometimes tedious routine of every-day duty, than in mere expressions of, and manifold external acts of devotion."

Lady Grey did not reply, but was shortly after summoned from the room, leaving Edith to draw quietly on, until the small pendulum in Lady Grey's boudoir, striking with its silvery tones a quarter to three o'clock, warned her it was time to prepare for her drive.

"Who was that you bowed to, my love, just now?" enquired Lady Grey, as she observed Edith recognize (with a slight inclination of her head), a crimson blush mantling at the same time her cheek, a very handsome young man on horseback, who returned it with evident *empressement* as they drove up to Lady Anne Effingham's door.

"Sir Allyne Vivian," said Edith. "The Vivians' of Everton are my Uncle Fitzwilliam's nearest neighbours, but I was not aware that they were in town."

Lady Anne was not at home, but they were more fortunate with the visit in Belgravia; Lady Hetherington and two of her daughters received Lady Grey and Edith. The latter was much struck with the change of manner evident in both the sisters towards herself. Lady Eveline even condescended to draw her chair closer, and commenced the usual routine of questions among young ladies *lancéed* in the *beau*-

monde, of whether she was going to this ball, and to that concert, etc., etc.

"This is your first season, is it not, Miss Trevor?" enquired Lady Mary Forster; "and an awful *dépense de soi-meme* you will soon find it; you will not have a single moment you can call your own."

Edith smiled.

"I should be very sorry, Lady Mary, to verify your predictions; though it will be my first introtroduction to a season in London, I am not in the slightest degree alarmed at the prospect. Are you not surprised?"

They were here interrupted by the entrance of Miss Vivian of Summerfield, with the youngest of the Lady Fosters.

"How tired you look, Louisa," said Lady Eveline, to the former, as she advanced to meet Edith; "where in the world has Lucy been taking you to?"

"We have only been taking a turn in the square," replied Miss Vivian; "the mornings are now beginning to grow very warm, but we have enjoyed the stroll exceedingly."

"How Lucy will miss you," said Lady Eveline, somewhat scornfully, "when you go away; she never gets me to walk with her."

"I wish I knew," rejoined her cousin, "that Lucy could return to Summerfield with *me*."

A mild and grateful look from the youthful and interesting Lady Lucy, was the only reply.

Edith thought she had rarely, if ever, seen a sweeter

face. There was certainly none of the dazzling beauty of her elder sister; indeed, in a crowd, Lady Lucy Forster might have passed unnoticed; but few could see her, and gaze on her innocent face without being insensibly drawn by an irresistible fascination towards one so modest and retiring.

"I shall be delighted to take charge of any commission, my dear Edith, for Marion Fitzwilliam," said Louisa Vivian, as Edith made her the request for the safe conveyance of her promised drawing; "I shall be leaving town the day after to-morrow."

"Here, I declare," exclaimed Lady Mary, "is Allyne and Forster," as, from the window, she perceived her cousin, Sir Allyne, and her brother, Lord Forster, at the door, lightly vault from their horses. "I did not know that Allyne was in town."

Annoyance and surprise were depicted in Lady Eveline's countenance, though she endeavoured to conceal both as she replied, with affected indifference—

"Well, my dear Mary, Allyne is always, I think, in town at this time of the year; his visit is most *apropos* just now, for I wished much to have his opinion about the last new music that Cramer has sent us."

"A charming *coterie*, I declare," said Lord Forster, as he approached the corner of the room where his sisters and their visitors were sitting. On perceiving Miss Trevor, his lordship bowed with marked pleasure at meeting her. Sir Allyne's manner was more distant,

at least, so thought Edith, and for the first time in her life, she felt constrained and ill at ease.

He enquired politely for Sir James and Lady Fitzwilliam, and asked if they were in town.

"Allyne," said Lady Eveline, advancing towards her cousin, "you must settle for me the songs I am to sing to-morrow night at Lady M——'s; unless you do, I shall not please you; here is all my music to pick and choose from. Will you come?" she continued somewhat impatiently.

Are you going to Lady M——'s, Miss Trevor?" asked Sir Allyne, as he prepared to follow the Lady Eveline into the adjoining room, where stood the piano, a magnificent one, literally covered with music.

"No," replied Edith; "we are not acquainted with Lady M——."

At this moment, Lady Grey moved to take her leave, and other visitors were announced. Lord Forster offered his arm to hand her ladyship to her carriage, saying, as they descended the large staircase—

"We shall meet you, I hope, at Lady Anne Effingham's, on Thursday?"

"Yes, we propose going to her ball."

"Then, Miss Trevor, will you allow me the pleasure of the first quadrille?" said Lord Forster to Edith, as, in her turn he assisted her into the carriage.

Edith quietly assented, his lordship bowed, and they drove away.

"Lord Forster is a nice young man," observed Lady Grey, musingly; "and I like his mother better than

I thought I should. Who was that that came in with him?"

"Sir Allyne Vivian."

"The same we met, my love, at Lady Anne's door?"

"The same," returned Edith, another blush most provokingly overspreading her face.

"Lady Hetherington's rooms were very warm, and you are quite flushed, you had better put down that window, my love," said Lady Grey, as she observed the sudden glow in her young companions face, little aware of the real cause. "The day is most unusually close."

Edith obeyed, immensely annoyed with herself for blushing at the mention of the name of a person she hardly knew anything about, and to whom she had no reason for believing she was anything but perfectly indifferent. It was so ridiculous, she was downright angry with herself. What was Sir Allyne Vivian to her? Ah, human nature is a mystery, and nature's feelings are mysterious, and the many windings and wanderings of the mind of man are mysteries! But for religion, to sooth and calm nature within, to govern and direct those feelings into their proper channel, alas! to where would man's imagination carry him?

Happily for Edith, religion with *her* exercised its powerfully invigorating sway.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

"Chaque jour m'apprend à bénir; et bénir est si doux! Bénir—c'est le ciel!"

GONTHIER.

"I HAVE so much to thank you for, dear, kind Mrs. Vivian; for, though you have never forced this subject upon me, you have, during my happy visit here, so sweetly shown me the fatal error I was so fast falling into, I can never feel sufficiently grateful to you, and I will own to you that I am feeling happier now than I have been for a long time."

"You make far too much, my dear Marion, of my poor efforts to disentangle your mind from the web 'Error had woven' so closely around you. We must not take away from the all-efficacious and powerful agency of God's enlightening Spirit, which, in answer to your own earnest prayer as well as mine, has been pleased so graciously to effect this happy change in your views of 'Truth.' For my own part, it is a deep and heartfelt cause of gratitude to Him for having thus answered my prayers for you, and to hear you speak as you do. Now, go where you may, I feel God's Spirit will accompany you, and guide you aright. But does Lady Fitzwilliam write that

you must positively return this week?" she continued, as they strolled in the pretty pleasure grounds of Summerfield, one bright sunny morning at the beginning of May.

"Indeed, yes. Thursday mamma is to be in town for a day or so, and wishes Graham and I to meet her there, and return to the Isle of Wight together. I am glad I shall see Louisa before I go. You expect her to-morrow, do you not, dear Mrs. Vivian? She will tell me how Edith is looking, and how she enjoys her first season in London."

"Yes," replied Mrs. Vivian; "but I should much suspect dear Edith's enjoyment consisted far more in the doing, simply and consistently, the will and pleasure of others (who she considers have a right to guide her), than in any of the gaieties of a London life."

"Oh! how rightly you judge Edith," returned Marion, as she followed Mrs. Vivian's example, and seated herself beside her on a low rustic seat on the lawn, overshaded by a luxuriant tree-lilac, whose magnificent opening blossoms perfumed the spot, and forming a very pleasant shelter from a somewhat warm sun. "Edith's piety is so peculiarly evidenced in her cheerful submission to duty on all occasions; her tastes are so very foreign to dissipation and a worldly life. As far as I can judge from her letters, she misses greatly her excellent friend, Mr. Livingstone, and his family, the pious rector of Gainsborough. But Edith also mentions having found

great pleasure in the society of your youngest niece, Lady Lucy Forster; indeed, so admiringly does she write of her, I have almost begun to be jealous of Edith's preference for her."

"Lucy! Lady Lucy!" replied Mrs. Vivian; ah, yes, she would be a sweet companion for Edith! A singular instance, again, of grace being neither of 'man nor of works,' but of God, and His gifts alone. My sister-in-law has always been strongly opposed to this doctrine. Indeed, poor Horatia has never known the meaning of religion; forms and ceremonies making up the whole of hers. Ethell! poor, unhappy Ethell! was the first victim to what I must ever term it, 'spurious Popery.' Eveline and Mary, the former most unpleasingly so, and Adelaide, who married abroad, a foreigner, and now a Roman Catholic. Lucy alone, the one who was reared in this hot-bed of fasts and feasts, this *Church supreme* system, is the only possessor among them of Divine Truth, and she undergoes no small persecution at the hands of her sisters, I can assure you, for 'self-conceited opinions,' her 'uncharitable views' of others, not to say her 'ignorance' and obstinacy; but my young niece, who is but just seventeen, bears on courageously, and, I am happy to say, exerts a certain influence with both father and brother, to the great indignation of their elder ladyships. Louisa tells me that Lucy is even desired to read the Bible to the old lord, in his own room, almost every morning, and he will never go to church

without her arm—this is, I may add, her only reward."

"I am not, then, surprised," dear Mrs. Vivian, "at Edith's being so prepossessed with Lady Lucy; and am glad that, in so near a neighbour, she has one so congenial to her. But do tell me of Lady Ethell; is the sad story about Mr. Priestly really true?"

"Alas! alas! it is too true, Marion. My poor niece has had trial upon trial, but *this is* her heaviest one, naturally. Eustace's mind has long been unsettled; and there is now little question of its having entirely given way. The last consultation they had about him, three months ago, and the opinion then given has only been too truly verified. There are days that he does not even know *his wife*. Nothing will induce her to be separated from him, or allow him to be removed from under her care. A *suite* of rooms at the Priory are set apart for him, and there he lives, at lucid intervals condemning himself for the 'errors' he disseminated amongst his flock, and mourning over those ministerial duties he has so ill discharged. She, poor thing, so accustomed to look up to him for sole guidance, to trust her very *soul's salvation* to him—she is, indeed, to be pitied; and his self-upbraidings she cannot understand; she considers them only the wanderings of his afflicted mind, and is bewildered herself. His sufferings are, as you can well conceive them, very great."

"What an awful picture!" returned Marion, as the latter finished the sad detail. "How fatal the effects of error on some minds!"

"Like poison, my dear Marion," rejoined Mrs. Vivian; "the one destroys life in the body, the other that of the soul; whereas the saving truths of religion, when rightly received, invigorate the one, and strengthen and support the other. *But* if we substitute a false theory, by which I mean 'any teaching for doctrine the commandments of men,' we cannot but look for some such fearful results. Eustace Priestly was, you know, educated at Oxford, and imbibed there the Tractarian error of the days we live in. He has gone on in what is termed the High Church system faster and faster, entangling himself and his conscience, until he has made shipwreck of both; and I can fancy that the slightest conviction, crossing the mind of one so highly wrought and enthusiastic as himself (of having misled not one but many souls), quite sufficient to have upset his reason. But we will now go in, my dear child; we shall gladly have our breakfast; we have almost sat here too long, enjoying this lovely morning."

So saying, they rose; and Mrs. Vivian, with her companion, took their way to the house, where they found letters, and one from Louisa, announcing her intended arrival that very afternoon.

Towards the close of the evening, the sound of carriage wheels was not to be mistaken as it ap-

proached (Mrs. Vivian having sent her little pony-chaise to meet her daughter at the station), and, in a few minutes, she had received her mother's warm embrace, and Marion Fitzwilliam's hearty congratulations on her return to Summerfield.

"Two months and more away!" exclaimed Louisa. "Oh! I am so glad to find myself at home again, in the dear old place. It is too late this evening to see much, but to-morrow I must visit all my old haunts. You are looking well, my dearest mother; and you too, dear Marion," affectionately extending her hand to her friend as she spoke. "It has been a great pleasure to my mother having had you with her."

"And to me, dear Louisa," replied Marion, returning the kind pressure; "it has been a very happy visit, and I am so glad to see you before I go, which will be now in a day or two. Tell us how you left them all in Belgrave Square, and Edith?"

"I have a parcel, a precious little pacquet, for you, from herself," replied Louisa.

"But, come," interrupted Mrs. Vivian, as she imprinted another kiss upon her daughter's cheek, "come and discuss these interesting matters at the tea-table. You must be tired, my child; and Marion and I have waited your arrival to take our tea, which will be very refreshing to us all."

"Well," resumed Louisa, "my Aunt Hetherington and cousins are all well," as she followed her mother's suggestion, and seated herself by her friend at the table; "Eveline and Mary growing more and

more Anglo-Romanist—I really cannot call it by any other name—and so completely shutting my aunt's eyes to anything like truth, for she positively sees only through them. Conceive Mr. Hamilton, the new rector at —— church in Belgravia, having recommended strongly to my cousins a book written by Dr. P., entitled, 'Two Rosaries, compiled for the use of the English Church;' and, amongst its contents, 'Meditations on the Sacred Mysteries,' in which 'Hail Mary' to the Virgin occurs 156 times, 'Our Father,' fifteen only; and the devotee is reminded that it will be found a great assistance to meditate before a crucifix or picture of our Lord on the cross. Eveline always wears one, and Mary has had a very beautiful one carved in bog-oak, sent her from Ireland for her bed-room."

"Distressing indeed," replied Mrs. Vivian, as her daughter finished speaking (a similar exclamation, at the same time, being uttered by Marion). "How much, how very much, Dr. P. has to answer for!"

"Yes, indeed, dear mamma. Last Sunday evening Lucy and I went to ——— church, to hear Mr. ———, that faithful preacher of the truth, in spite of all the ill-natured contempt and surprise evinced by Eveline and Mary, with whom, I believe, no excuse would have been at all available, had not *Edith Trevor* called for us in the carriage. We were greatly pleased with the very beautiful and affectionate manner he addressed his congregation. He remarked that 'The tendency of the age was

'infidelity; and as Popery had ever been the fruitful 'source of unbelief, so the refined Romanism (which 'Archdeacon W——— and his party are now labour-'ing to establish among us), is not so much the leading 'men to the brink of the Romish apostacy, as plung-'ing them headlong into the pit of infidelity; for 'men will be sure,' he said, 'to say, If this be the 'Christianity which men of such high intellect 'and attainments, as Archdeacon W——— have to 'offer us, away from us a system so paltry and 'puerile.' He spoke, too, of the growing error of the day, and remarked, very impressively, that 'If 'men will substitute tradition for the Bible—the 'authority of the Priest for the grace of Christ—the 'demon-olatrous practices, practices of the fourth 'and fifth centuries, for the purity of the apostolic 'Churches—if they teach salvation by sacraments and 'not by faith, leading their disciples from the sim-'plicity which is in Christ, and some of their Bishops, 'rather patronizing instead of frowning and decrying 'such unfaithfulness—then—before the judgment-'seat of Christ—Bishops and Presbyters will have 'to answer for the corruption of their Master's truth, 'and the apostacy occasioned.'* The sermon was a most excellent and highly impressive one; I longed for my cousins to have heard it."

"With such an example before their eyes as poor Eustace Priestly," interrupted Mrs. Vivian, "it is

* From Letter of the Rev. W. Brock to the Archbishop of York.

inconceivable how the heart can wrap itself up against the chance of conviction. Ethell herself is, I greatly fear, just in the state you have described Mr. ——— to have depicted; and I shudder to think what may be her next step, should Eustace either be taken from her by death, or continue without hope of cure. Perhaps lose her reason too."

"Poor little Horatia's early death," returned Louisa (alluding to Lady Ethell's only girl), "might now almost be termed a blessing, under these very melancholy circumstances. But tell me, dear mother, what news have you of Arthur? when are we to have him? Now that I have returned I shall miss him dreadfully."

"My love," replied her mother, "I trust he will now soon be with us. He has very kindly been taking poor Mr. Evelyn's duty for him, during his absence in the south of France, where he was advised to go to recruit his health. As you are already aware, his good friend is come home, much invigorated, to his parish; and Arthur writes me that I may expect him next week."

CHAPTER XXXV.

"No after thought. When once a wife,
The die is cast, and cast for life."

"And you wish to know my feelings on this all-important subject, dear mamma," said Mildred Vernon, at the close of an interesting *tete-a-tete* with her mother, in which we find them deeply engaged, some four or five months after the last mention of them. "How could I be insensible to Mr. de Vere's preference for *me*, amongst so many girls, my superiors in wealth as well as beauty. I feel, indeed, that I cannot be too grateful for the promise of so much happiness. My only drawback, and it is, indeed, a great one," she continued, as she affectionately encircled her arms around her mother's neck, "will be my necessary separation from you, dear, dear mamma."

Tears filled Mrs. Vernon's eyes as her daughter finished speaking. How often had she laid her child's future before the Lord, and besought Him to provide for her. Now, the prayer had been more than fully answered in the lot bestowed; one that, as far as concerned this world's gain, might be well

the envy of many. But what gave its chief value to Mrs. Vernon was, that she was about to give her child to one who looked beyond the things of time —to a sincere Christian, in word and thought. Deeply grateful as she was to Him, who had so richly rewarded her patient and abiding trust in Him, the parting before her with her dear Mildred would be keenly felt, especially by a parent so tenderly attached as was Mrs. Vernon to her dear child.

"Our separation will be but temporary, I trust, my child," she said, as she returned Mildred's fond embrace; "I hope we may still be much together. We have seen many a cloudy day together, and you have shared with me many a sorrow. I trust we may both be enabled, in those of the 'sunshine,' He who maketh poor and maketh rich is graciously giving us (for your prosperity, dearest, will ever be mine), to praise and glorify Him. Your father and I will most probably live once more in England, as your happy marriage will effect a certain change for the better in our circumstances. But we are forgetting, my dear Mildred, Lady Camhay's letter, which must be answered immediately. She writes most kindly and flatteringly of all her son has said of you, my love. I shall enclose a note in yours, and we must do it at once."

"I only hope," replied Mildred, "I shall not very much disappoint Lady Camhay. Her letter is, indeed, most kind; but she will not look on me as

indulgently as you, mamma, or her son, you know," and Mildred smiled. "However, to business," she continued, and she drew her chair close to her little writing-table, and prepared to answer her future mother-in-law's kind letter.

Brooke de Vere was the only son, and only child, of Lord and Lady Camhay. His father, the present Lord C., had distinguished himself in the Peninsular war. At its termination, he married a lady, his equal in rank and fortune; succeeded early in life to his old title and estates, and, with the exception of yearly visits to the metropolis (to which he was called by parliamentary duties), had resided habitually on his beautiful property in the north of England. Brooke had been brought up with the utmost deference for his father and mother; and, though their only child, and a great object with both, he was a singular instance of being wholly unspoiled by either. Lord Camhay, as an old soldier, considered that a boy was always the better for what is termed "roughing it," and had resolved, therefore, that his son should do so. He sent him early to a public school, and subsequently to college; and, at the present time, when we find him not only a clever and talented young man, but a most amiable one, he was often known to say that he owed every virtue he possessed chiefly to the manly education his father had given him. Lady Camhay, in this particular, had had but little to say to her son, though from her he had imbibed his first religious impres-

sions. She was a pious woman, somewhat stern in manner, though this greatly wore off when she was well known. Proud of, and fond of her son, she was not tyrannical in her affection towards him; her mind was very well regulated, and she knew when she parted with him, on the completion of his studies at Oxford, for a tour on the Continent for three years or more, that it was not unlikely, master (unlimited master) as he was of his own actions, as well as comfortably independent in his fortune, he might meet with a companion which would induce him to marry early in life. Lady Camhay manifested no surprise, and certainly none of the jealousy (some mothers are apt to manifest at their only sons venturing to do what they call folly) when Brooke announced to his father and herself, in a joint letter, of his wish to marry Miss Vernon, Mr. Vernon's (of Ivy Tower) only daughter, without a penny; and *this*, too, only a month before she was looking forward to his promised return home. Both herself and his father mutually agreed that, though he was young, it would be as well that he should be permitted to follow the bent of his wishes. They saw no reason to refuse their consent, or to disapprove his choice. As to the young lady being without fortune, Brooke did not want money, and therefore, in a very unworldly-like way, Lord and Lady Camhay wrote kindly and consistently to their son, giving him at once their full consent.

Mr. de Vere, on the receipt of this letter, started

immediately for Camhay, his father's country seat, near Hereford, to thank both his parents for their considerate way of acting by him, and repeat, *à vive voce*, the praises and perfections of the young and interesting person he was so soon to present to them as a daughter. Lady Camhay had charmed her son still further by immediately writing to Mildred and Mrs. Vernon, which letter we have seen both mother and daughter about to answer.

The sudden change in his child's prospects was not without a happy influence on Mr. Vernon, for he was by no means an insensible father; and the brilliant marriage she was about to make produced the happiest alteration in one whose hitherto adverse circumstances had almost made him cease to look or hope for any good. Mrs. Vernon's joy was, indeed, inexpressible to see her husband smile again, and take the liveliest interest in the various preparations for the joyous event before them. The sun was again shining on her path; and grateful indeed did she feel to Him who was thus laying her "lines in such pleasant places," and so faithfully fulfilling His promise, "that they who trust in Him shall not be ashamed."

In less than a month the Vernons had left B. for London, where Mildred and her parents became immediately known to her new relations, all of whom were assembled to meet her. And now we must leave her awhile, whilst we turn to other scenes, perhaps as interesting to our readers.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

"I need thy presence every passing hour;
What but thy grace can foil temptation's pow'r?
Who like thyself my guide and stay can be?
Thro' 'Clouds and Sunshine,' oh, abide with me!"

H. F. Lyte.

"And you do not wish to go out with me to-day, my love?" said Lady Grey to her step-daughter, as she rose from the lunch-table to prepare for her accustomed drive at half-past two o'clock.

"I have a slight headache," returned Edith, "and I fancy that a little walk will do me more good than either visiting or driving about, if you will be kind enough to excuse my company."

"My dear child," replied Lady Grey, "do as you like, but be careful that you do not increase your headache by over fatigue, and unfit yourself for this evening's engagement." So saying, Lady Grey left the room.

Full half-an-hour had elapsed, and still Edith Trevor sat in the same place, and in the same chair in which Lady Grey had left her; and so deep had been the *reverie* in which she was plunged, she had hardly noticed the carriage-wheels which bore her

step-mother from the door, whilst, with her head gently resting on her arm, there she sat. And on what are her thoughts so busily engaged? and why is her usually sweet countenance now so overcast? Something like an expression of sorrow, mingled with regret, is passing over that fair face! What has happened, thus to disturb her peaceful serenity of mind? Edith has been a month in town; she has mingled amongst the gay throng of "Vanity Fair" almost night after night. Who ever did this yet, even under the fairest auspices, and not experience, at one time or another, the sharp prick of the thorn, though so well concealed beneath the rose? Poor Edith has done this. She has been more than a month in town—has been courted and run after as Lord Grey's only daughter—an heiress, as all heiresses usually are; but amongst the many constantly in her society, daily in her company, and showing her a marked preference, has been Sir Allyne Vivian. They have met almost at every house; he has been a constant guest at her father's table. His admiration of her has been undisguised. She has been proud of it; for she has believed that all his apparent preference for her was sincere as she felt his character was upright and noble. But a whisper, which reached her ear last night at a *soirée* of Mrs. Clifford's, has disturbed the serenity of her mind, and shaken the confidence so fast gaining ground there. Highly refined and susceptible as she was, the bare idea that Sir Allyne

Vivian *had* been—*was*—trifling with her, was distressing in the extreme. Could Miss Clifford be indeed rightly informed? Might there not have been some mistake? How came she to be so well acquainted with Sir Allyne, to know so much about him? The how and the why were readily answered to Edith's mind. Miss Clifford was related—distantly related—to him. Her mother was a cousin of the late Lady Vivian, and, *she* had told her, had said distinctly, and that in a kind way too, "Beware, beware, my dear Edith, of Allyne! He is a nice, amiable creature, but much too fond of making impressions on young ladies, without really meaning anything in his attentions. A cousin of mine—Mildred Vernon—who (as she is about to be married, and very well too, matters little about mentioning the name,) he was really nearly marrying (at least it was so supposed), but it came to nothing after all. And now, you know, it is currently reported, and I believe with very good grounds of truth, that Sir Allyne is engaged to his cousin, Lady Eveline Foster."

These were the words that hung so heavy upon Edith's heart, that had so disturbed her; for, alas! she had made the discovery that Allyne was no longer indifferent to *her*. And it was now that, for the first time, she felt the full extent of the loss her childhood had sustained. To a mother's ear she could have unveiled her heart, she might have confided her secret; but a mother could alone under-

stand the exquisite delicacy of those feelings that were passing within her. Her step-mother, an excellent person, and fully appreciated by Edith, was still not one likely to be able to sympathize with her or even to comprehend her. It was doubtful whether she had even remarked Sir Allyne's attentions to her, though she had frequently, amongst others, observed that he was a nice, pleasing young man.

To Edith her father was only such in name. That she lived, moved about him, was an ornament—a bright ornament—to him, he was fully sensible of. Lord Grey would have missed his daughter, had she not occupied her accustomed place in the daily routine; but that was all; further than this, they knew nothing of each other.

Alas, for Edith!—the envied Edith Trevor! With all her wealth, her rank, and personal attractions, she stood alone in the hour when she most needed a friend! Marion Fitzwilliam was away, too; if she had only been near her! But, even to *her*, would she like to confess that she had allowed her affections *so* far to stray as to give them *un*asked? "But, oh! *not* unsought," said Edith to herself, as she wiped away a tear that was silently rolling down her cheek, and tried to recall the events of the past eventful month, "if he *is* engaged to his cousin, Lady Eveline Forster—if *it is* true that they are to be married—Allyne has not acted kindly by me; but I have been to blame, greatly to blame, in allowing myself to believe that he meant so much by

attentions which, after all, perhaps, he is so accustomed to pay every one, he sees in them nothing but civility, common civility. I will try and be silly no more," continued Edith, rising at length from the arm-chair in which she had been reclining; "but I shall see him to-night! Oh! how I wish we were not going to Lady Maria's! How I wish I was back again at dear Gainsborough!"—and her thoughts reverted for a moment to Budd, and the Livingstone's, with the peaceful Rectory—"but I will see what a turn in the square will do for me," as she put her hand to her head, which was throbbing violently, and a sigh—a deep sigh—escaped her.

She had hardly turned the key of the square, and let herself in, and was beginning to feel the soothing influence of the pleasant afternoon breeze on her fevered brow, when a voice—the soft, mild voice, of Lady Lucy Forster at the gate begging admission (as she was without her own key)—caused Edith to turn round and retrace her steps. At any other moment, a walk with Lady Lucy would have been peculiarly pleasant to her, but poor Edith just now would have preferred to have been quite alone. She had come for that purpose. However, as this now was not possible, with her usual sweetness of manner and unselfishness of character, she opened the gate without delay, and admitted her young friend.

"This is very pleasant to me, my dear Miss Trevor! I generally walk here an hour or so before dinner, but have never before been so fortunate as to meet

you. . . . . But you do not look well! I hope you are not suffering!"

"Only from a severe headache," returned Edith, with a faint smile; "the day has been very oppressive, I came here, like you, in search of a *little breeze* before dinner, and find the air very refreshing."

The sound of voices in a rather loud key, of a party riding by, for a moment now arrested Edith's attention (as she fancied she caught the sound of more than one familiar to her).

"It is my Cousin Allyne, with Eveline and Mary," observed Lady Lucy, as she perceived Edith's attention a moment withdrawn. "It was arranged they were to ride this afternoon together, but oh, how glad I am to be at length emancipated. I have been obliged to remain stationary by mamma," continued her young ladyship, "the whole morning, teaching her a new crochet stitch, which I should not have minded at all, but I have been so provoked; Eveline has been full two hours detaining Allyne, endeavouring to ensnare him into Tractarian views! This she has long been busily engaged in, but though I, of course, could say nothing, being hardly expected to join in conversation, I was pleased, greatly pleased to find Allyne so boldly and openly advocate pure Gospel Truth. Eveline told him he was downright Low Church, and he replied that if the opinions he had stated so much in opposition to hers were what she styled Low Church, he certainly was; but that he only professed to belong to the Established

Church of England as it was, not the new dissent from it, which he called the revival of old customs and invention of so many new, which he considered the Tractarians and Puseyites to be the promoters of. 'In poor Ethell's husband, Eustace Priestly's case, I think,' he continued, 'we have a very fair specimen of what Puseyism leads to; and in the Church (to please you, Eveline, and satisfy myself, I have more than once attended ———, hard by) I see nothing but a kind of well-concealed Popery to recommend it; the secession too, of its late rector to Rome, who, I find, is brother to the present incumbent, *your pattern man*, who the other day, at a meeting in Dublin, made an open denunciation of his Royal Highness Prince Albert, her most gracious Majesty's Consort, for his generous patronage of that excellent charity for the Sons of the Clergy. I cannot, I confess, allow of any argument in favour of what I feel to be such real heresy.' Eveline looked greatly annoyed; the horses came to the door, however, at the moment, and I left them preparing for their ride. I wished you could have heard Allyne, it was so like him when urged to the point plain and straight forward."

What an echo did these praises of him find in Edith's heart! But she paid no other attention to it than by enquiring what Sir Allyne Vivian had meant about the rector of ———, in Belgravia, and what had happened in Dublin.

"Oh," replied Lady Lucy, "simply this; his

Royal Highness attended, lately, a meeting for the Sons of the Clergy, at which, in remarking on the blessings of the glorious Reformation, he observed, with his usual noble advocacy of Protestant truth, that the liberties of a nation were never safer than in the hands of a clergy bound to the people by domestic ties (alluding to the celibacy enjoined by the Romish faith). The late rector of —— (and cousin of the present, who, Allyne truly says, entertains the same views he did) seceded to the Romish Church but a year or two since; and, at a great meeting, not long since, in Dublin, as a Roman Catholic priest, allowed himself so far to be carried away in his violence, as to arraign so illustrious and high a personage as the Consort of our beloved Sovereign."

"Herself so distinguished," returned Edith, "for evidencing, in the fulfilment of every domestic virtue, the influence of true and vital religion. As an humble individual, I myself cannot sufficiently admire the beautiful way (steering clear of all party spirit) in which her Majesty, by actions, and not in words only, upholds and supports the Protestant faith; and I feel very hopeful that, under her highly enlightened and Christian sway, this error will yet find it difficult to make all the inroads it so boasts of doing. Our dear country is blessed in having so gentle and Christian a lady for its beloved Queen."

They continued talking for some time on indifferent subjects, until Edith, looking at her watch, perceived that she had but just time to dress for

dinner; wishing her friend, therefore, a hasty farewell, she hurried in.

The first thing that greeted Edith on entering, that evening, Lady Maria Sandford's drawing-room, was a small *coterie* at one end of the room, amongst whom were Lady E. Forster and Sir Allyne Vivian. Never had her ladyship appeared more animated, or in better spirits, and never, certainly, had she welcomed Edith so cordially as on the present occasion. She rose, and seemed to wish to detain her, offering her a seat near her, whilst Sir Allyne Vivian tendered his; but poor Edith was too glad to pass on with Lady Grey, acknowledging, somewhat distantly, the politeness offered. Alas! she was doomed to annoyance. She had hardly seated herself, before Lord Forster, taking advantage of a vacant place beside her, sat down, and remained by her the whole evening.

It was impossible for Edith to shut her eyes to the very evident admiration of and marked preference of this young nobleman for her from the very first. She had in every way, by every means in her power, endeavoured to discourage him, but this had been difficult, the terms of intimacy between the two families being such as to render distant conduct almost impossible; not that she was insensible to the many amiable qualities Lord Forster possessed, but her feelings being pre-engaged, it was difficult to resign herself patiently to what was almost becoming—persecution! On the present occasion, however, there was nothing else for it. Lady Grey was too

much engrossed with her friends, the Sandfords and Mrs. Clifford, to remark (perhaps she was wilfully blind) all the torture her step-daughter was enduring. Once only Sir Allyne Vivian approached her during the evening, and this was to express the hope that she would sing; but Edith was downright ill, and too unhappy to comply, besides that she had previously been solicited to do so by Lady Maria Sandford, and had declined. Never had Edith felt the evening so long, and most gladly did she hail the announcement, somewhat earlier than usual, of Lady Grey's carriage. Oh, how earnestly did she seek in prayer, that night, the Refuge of the weary, the heavy-laden, the disappointed! How earnestly did the lonely girl implore the aid of the Hearer of Prayer, that her will might be subdued *to His!* her affections set on things above! heavenly things become more and more precious to her, and earthly ones only made subservient to them! And Edith rose, strengthened and solaced. She had long been accustomed to carry every burden to the throne of grace, every sorrow, and every joy; and she knew her trust in Him would not now be disappointed.

The following morning she was summoned at a somewhat unusual hour to her step-mother's presence.

"Edith, my love," said Lady Grey, as she entered her room, "I sent for you, as I wish to have a little conversation with you this morning. I have something to mention to you from your father, which, he thought, might perhaps come more pleasantly to you

through myself. Come, sit down. I hope that what I have to communicate to you may not be unpleasing. You know I dislike mysteries, and all *détours;* so I will, therefore, come to the point at once, and tell you that Lord Forster, Lord Hetherington's only son, has proposed for you to your father. He is a most amiable young man; and I have noticed since our arrival in town, with much pleasure, his growing preference for you. It is a connection that would give your father and myself infinite satisfaction; but as you are the person most concerned in such a matter, I would wish to know your own unbiassed feelings on the subject. Your father on no account wishes to control your choice—you are perfectly free to accept or refuse."

"My dear Lady Grey, how kind, how very kind this is of you," returned Edith, as her colour flitted to and fro her cheek; "I am much obliged by Lord Forster's good opinion of me, and am sure he is, as you say, a very excellent young man; but as I may speak openly, without fear of offending either my father or yourself, I will at once candidly tell you, I do not at all return his preference; I never could consent to become his wife. I am very sorry indeed that it should have happened."

"There is no occasion to be sorry, my dear Edith," returned Lady Grey, almost smiling at her apparent contrition for what was no fault of hers; "when you are a little more experienced in the ways of the

world, you will learn that these things are of every-day occurrence."

"My Aunt Emily writes me, a day or two since, that she would like very much I should pay her a visit this summer," resumed Edith, after a short pause. "Would this not be a good moment, dear Lady Grey, for my doing so? I could so well join you and my father later at Gainsborough Castle. It will be so unpleasant to meet the Hetheringtons as we do every day, and we can hardly avoid it."

There was a tone of entreaty in the way that this suggestion was made that somewhat surprised Lady Grey. Good-natured as she was, she would have thought it right to have refused this request, had she believed it proceeded solely, on Edith's part, to save herself from the gaieties of a world she considered it her duty to insist on her entering; but Lady Grey felt persuaded, from all she had observed, that there were other reasons that influenced her desire to leave town *so* immediately. The truth must be told. She had in some measure penetrated her step-daughter's secret; and though she was not a person to *say* much, she had a heart, a kind one, and knew how to act. Edith's words, therefore, as she continued in the same strain, were not without their due effect.

"If you could only spare me, dear Lady Grey, and would forgive my preferring just now the country, I should, I know, feel much better. I have had nothing but headaches lately."

Lady Grey looked up at the fair but flushed face before her. There was an expression of suffering she had never before seen in her; she saw that Edith was not well, and replied,

"I will speak of this, my dear child, to your father. It *might* be as well that you should leave town a while; and as you so particularly desire to do so, you may trust to my endeavours to promote it."

Edith thanked Lady Grey for her kindness, and hurried away to her own room to conceal her emotion.

And Lady Grey was as good as her word, and hastened to acquaint Lord Grey with his daughter's refusal of Lord Forster, and urged the propriety of her leaving town for a short time, Lord Hetherington's family being such very near neighbours. Nor did she omit to suggest a visit to her Aunt Montagu as being the most feasible.

Lord Grey saw no reason to object to this plan. Somewhat *contrariéed* that his daughter should see fit to oppose him, in her rejection of Lord Forster (a thing he never dreamt of), it would be just as well she should be away for a time.

Strange enough it was, Mr. Montagu, his brother-in-law, happened to be in town at this moment, and would be a safe escort for Edith. Though his lordship was by no means pleased at the communication his wife had made him, he volunteered, nevertheless, to make the necessary arrangements for this object with his brother-in-law, and a week later saw Edith

most comfortably housed with Mr. and Mrs. Montagu (her mother's only sister), away from all the noise and busy excitement of London, enjoying the quiet of the Rectory, and the delightful society of such truly pious and devoted Christians as her uncle and aunt both were.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

"Oh, why should Heavenly God to man have such regard!"

SPENSER.

Two months more have passed away, and we find ourselves again in the Isle of Wight. It was at the close of a beautiful day in the beginning of July—the sun had only just set, but the clouds still retained the rosy tints they had caught from his parting rays—that, on a terrace, whose steps wound gradually down to the very edge of the expansive beach, we find two persons seated on a low rustic bench. The tide is coming in, and the gentle ripple of the wave, every now and then in its return beating the pebbly shore, is in perfect harmony with the scene around.

"I can hardly realize all my happiness," at length burst from the lips of one of the speakers, "that you should have still retained your former feelings towards me, my dear Arthur, in spite of all that must have appeared to you as so much perversity, as well as downright self-conceit."

"Just precisely," returned the other, "because it proceeded from neither one nor the other, my dear Marion. I feel that (having committed you in prayer to God, and surrendered to Him what was at

the time a very, very great sacrifice)," continued the young man, looking affectionately at his companion as he spoke, "I am permitted the rich reward of my trust; not only is my dear early friend restored to those convictions I had trembled to think she had been led away from, but she accepts me as her partner for the rest of this life's pilgrimage, calculated by her humility and the distrust of herself—shall I not say rather, knowledge of herself? that in us, in our flesh, dwelleth no good thing—to be an essential help and assistance in my ministerial course. We have both cause, dearest Marion, to be exceedingly grateful to our Heavenly Father."

"Indeed, most truly do I echo your words, Arthur. I had, alas! in the folly of human blindness, vainly fancied I could, by mortification, strict attendance at church, et cetera, recommend myself some way to God, and receive comfort to my own heart; wholly forgetting I was exceedingly dishonouring Him who, in taking on Himself our sins and dying to redeem us, completed the work, leaving us no excuse for mingling any of our own poor doings with it. I hope I may henceforth ever distrust self, as you say, looking only unto Him. With this feeling I joyfully look forward to my duties as a clergyman's wife. You know," she continued, somewhat playfully, "I always wished to marry one of your profession."

This conversation took place between Arthur Vivian and Marion Fitzwilliam a few days after his

arrival at the Rock, Sir James Fitzwilliam's beautiful marine residence in the island. He had proposed and been accepted by Marion's father, and he was now her acknowledged and affianced husband. They were to be immediately married—that is to say as soon as the Rectory (become vacant by the death of poor Mr. Graham somewhat suddenly) could be got ready for their reception. It was a lovely little spot, standing in at least three or more acres of pretty pleasure ground, with the woods of Everton on one side, a pretty view of Paington Abbey in the distance, and the little church of Everton, with its ivy-covered tower on the other, situated, as it were, to shelter and protect it. The way in which this happy turn in affairs was effected will, no doubt, be interesting to my readers. Mrs. Vivian, whose affectionate interest in Marion Fitzwilliam was most genuine and sincere, had for some time been aware of the attachment existing between her and her son. She knew Arthur's steady and uncompromising character, and however great might be the sacrifice to him to resign his long-cherished hopes of his union with Marion, he would not hesitate one moment to do so, if (as he was under the impression) she had embraced those High Church feelings and principles which were so directly opposed to the doctrines he entertained.

His mother had seen with regret his departure; though she fully acknowledged the call for his doing so, namely, to assist a brother clergyman (disabled

by severe indisposition) in his duty; but she knew also the motives that had rendered it a happy subserviency to him. She hailed, however, the opportunity of having her young friend awhile with her, as she could not altogether persuade herself that Marion's religious views had taken their basis from any solid conviction.

Mrs. Vivian was right; her young friend had been carried away by a zeal not, certainly, according to knowledge, but from her long residence abroad, where she had but few opportunities (and those irregular and uncertain) of attending church, as well as the total absence of family prayer in her father's house, to hail with delight the early morning services at Nutleigh, and to receive with readiness the bias we have seen arising from its unwholesome influence; but we have likewise seen and heard this inestimable woman leading her forth from this labyrinth of error, and showing her, with much affection, truth—vital truth; and of her having the inexpressible joy and comfort of seeing Marion Fitzwilliam fully convinced, and firmly receiving her truthful reasonings.

She returned to her family in the Isle of Wight, and Arthur to his mother and sister at Summerfield, where the joyful news awaited him that there no longer existed any obstacle to his union with Marion, Mrs. Vivian explaining all that had passed between them; and, thus fully re-assured, he lost no time in making his way to the Rock—and we have already seen the happy results.

Arthur Vivian was a favourite with Lady Fitzwilliam, who never forgot her lost son's early friendship for him; and, indeed, such had been the happy change effected in her ladyship (and here we must not omit to acknowledge Miss Sinclair's silent, but unwearied endeavours in her behalf), that Arthur had every chance of continuing the good work in the family, now that he was about to become so close a member. Thus did God, through various dispensations, cause, in this family, the clouds of darkness to disperse, and the bright rays of gospel sunshine to dawn.

"And Mr. Graham," continued Marion, "our dear and valued friend, his death has been very sudden, though he was not well when I left Summerfield. This loss will be sensibly felt by your mother."

"Yes, indeed," replied Arthur; "she does feel it. He was my father's intimate friend as well as assistant in his parish. But a death like his, Marion, is almost to be envied—full of faith, full of joy—looking unto Him (as were his last words) who is the author and finisher of our faith. I hope I may be enabled only to follow in his steps. Allyne, my cousin, has begged our acceptance of the Rectory, and heartily congratulated me on my happiness. He is an amiable young man, extremely well disposed in religious matters, most anxious to promote every good work in our neighbourhood."

"In which, I should say, his sister, Mrs. Tudor,

has always lent her aid," remarked Marion; "the little I know of her has always been so amiable and Christian."

"Very much so, dear Marion," returned Arthur; I believe Emmeline to be sincerely pious. Her example has had great influence, too, with Allyne, to whom she is naturally much attached; but, now she is married, she can hardly be expected to be so much with him. Mr. Tudor has property in the north of England, as well as in Scotland, for which, I believe they are shortly leaving Everton. It is doubly pleasing to me to find my cousin so well impressed. I have had several conversations with him lately, which leaves me without any doubt on this head. By-the-bye, Marion, we have had so many things to discuss together, I quite forgot a piece of news I should have told you earlier, and which speaking of Allyne reminds me of. He told me your cousin, Edith Trevor, was about to marry Lord Forster, my Uncle Lord Hetherington's only son. Did you know it?"

"Edith marry Lord Forster!" exclaimed Marion, with astonishment. "Oh, Arthur! can this really be true? I must have known it if it were so, long since. I cannot believe it; she has never once mentioned him in any of her letters. It is true, I have wondered at dear Edith's silence of late, and have written twice to Belgrave-square without reply. But," continued she, musingly, "it is so very unlikely. Lord Forster is the last

man on earth Edith would marry. The one much more suited to her, in every respect, would be Sir Allyne Vivian."

"In that I quite agree with you," replied her companion; "but that does not prove at all that Lord and Lady Grey may not have thought Forster a very good match for Edith, and that she may have been prevailed upon to have accepted him."

"Well, it makes me quite anxious for news of my dear little cousin; she is so truly pious, so humbly desirous of following, in lowliness of mind, her Saviour," rejoined Marion. "Impossible that she should marry such a worldling as Lord Forster. I never will believe the world *can* have so turned her head, every letter speaking so much against its worthlessness, its emptiness; besides, I have an idea that her feelings were engaged in a very different direction. But, Arthur, it is surely getting very late, we had better go in," said Marion, rising from their pleasant seat, and drawing her shawl closer round her; "mamma will wonder what has become of us."

Arm in arm they ascended the steps, pausing on the last to give a farewell look at the scene they *were leaving*. Night was advancing, and the shadows fast darkening on the calm, unruffled sea, which lay almost as a vast lake at their feet, whilst here and there were a few fishing-boats, in readiness by morning's dawn for their accustomed toil.

"How beautiful the sea looks to night, does it not,

dear Arthur? So still, so very calm!" said Marion; "who would suppose, to look at it now, that there could ever arise storms to shake and convulse its smooth bosom?"

"A true picture of the human heart!" replied Arthur. "But one, and that the voice of Jesus, that can calm the stormy waters, or say, 'Peace, be still,' to the troubled passions of man's soul."

They now entered the house where tea was already on the table, awaiting only Marion to preside as usual. Sir James Fitzwilliam was conning over his news paper, which he laid down on their approach. Lady Fitzwilliam had but just entered the room.

"You will have plenty of work, Arthur," said the baronet, as he rose from his chair, and stood up with his future son-in-law, by the fire place, "plenty of work to do at Everton. Priestley's three curates are as busy as ever *he* was in disseminating Puseyism, and Nutleigh is now so over-run with this rank weed, you will find it hard to keep Everton free; poor Graham's death leaving you to stand alone, too, against three."

"As long as I am enabled, by God's grace, to preach simply and faithfully the pure gospel of my Lord and Master, I do not fear, my dear Sir James," returned the young man. "I have lost an invaluable friend in him, however, though he has left his parish as every true servant of the Lord Jesus ought to do, in an admirable state. There is not a cottage, I venture to affirm, in Everton, that has not the Bible, and

more, whose inhabitants, one and all of them, *readers* of God's Word. Mr. Graham was one of those who cultivated especially a spirit of friendly intercourse with his people, encouraging a freedom of conversation on Scripture topics, and thus gaining their confidence, whilst he endeavoured to enlighten their souls. 'Circulate the Scriptures largely,' was his maxim; 'let God's Word teach man's soul, and we need not fear Puseyism or Papacy. I firmly believe,' he would say, '*the only* way to meet this dangerous and insinuating error is with the Bible in the hand.'"

Arthur chose, that evening, for family prayer, as a portion of God's Word, part of St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, sixth chapter, eleventh to the nineteenth verse, explaining it as he went on.

As he wished his young friend "good night," Sir James warmly expressed to him his persuasion that he himself would be a great blessing to his parish.

"You are faithful to your profession, Arthur, and consistent withal; and consistency gains for its just reward—respect."

Sir James had had, indeed, reason to value the blessings of genuine religion sown in his house. True piety, in her brightest but most unostentatious form, had for several years been an inmate there, and her influence had diffused itself over almost every individual in his family. His wife, Lady Fitzwilliam, was now no longer the proud and indifferent woman of former years. Affliction had been sanctified to her, and, though she was but slowly journeying on the road,

she found interest in everything that was good, and could appreciate what was so around her; her daughters were both comforts to her, and Arthur was as another son. The idea was very pleasant to her, that the Rectory at Everton was little more than a mile and a half from Paington Abbey, their usual residence.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

As a sweet dew to keep your souls from blight!
Earth will forsake—oh, happy to have given
Th' unbroken heart's first fragrance unto heaven!

MRS. HEMANS.

"AND so Mildred Vernon is married! I am glad, very glad of it," said Sir Allyne Vivian to his sister, as they walked together, the day before that appointed for Emmeline's departure from Everton; "but why did not my aunt Vernon tell us this before? I had no idea that Mildred was about to be married."

"Nor I either," replied Mrs. Tudor; "however, like yourself, I am very glad of it; such a good marriage, too, in a worldly point of view. Mr. de Vere's property, or rather Lord Camhay's, is extensive and very beautiful, I have been told, somewhere near Hereford. They were married in London on the 27th ult."

"I am somewhat surprised we should have been left without *any* intimation—my mother's sister too! We have never known or seen much of them, however, you know," observed Emmeline, "they lived abroad so much, we never met; and there was no reason, especially, for making them any par-

ticular invitation to come to *us*. But by-the-bye, Allyne, this reminds me of something which I am anxious to ask you about. You know, dearest, I trust, how delighted I should be, before I finally leave you, to take possession of my new home, to hear of any event that would tend to your happiness, and I should like to know the truth of a report which I hear everywhere confidently spoken of. Is it true you have thoughts of marrying Eveline Forster?"

"My cousin Eveline! Where did you hear my dear Emmy, this strange piece of absurdity, and *how could* such a folly, for a moment, enter your wise head?" returned Sir Allyne, with warmth, not unaccompanied with considerable astonishment. "If I had any ideas of marrying, at the present moment, *Eveline* would certainly be the last person I should think of."

"If you had any such purpose," rejoined Emmeline, "you would have *let me*, I fancy, into your secret, at least. However, it was Aunt Vivian who (though I had heard it before) somewhat surprised me (this morning whilst I was sitting with her), by asking me if it was true that you were to marry Eveline. Aunt Vivian looked so very happy! Arthur's marriage has pleased her greatly; she is expecting them at the Rectory early next week, and is making all sorts of preparations for them. I believe she heard the piece of news I have told you, indeed, she mentioned her informant was Miss Trevor —Edith Trevor—for I was very curious to know."

"From Miss Trevor!" exclaimed Sir Allyne; "well, that surprises me more and more, as, from the connection *she* is about to make with some of our family, I should have supposed she would naturally have been better informed."

"To what connection, my dear Allyne, do you allude?" enquired his sister.

"Aunt Vivian did not then give you that piece of information?" resumed Sir Allyne, with something of dryness in his tone.

"No, indeed," replied Mrs. Tudor, pausing for a moment, and looking up at her brother enquiringly.

"You did not know, then, that Miss Trevor was engaged to Forster?" quickly rejoined her brother.

"No, indeed, this is the first I have heard of it. As she is an heiress, this will give my uncle and aunt great satisfaction, I should think. I think, however, that Miss Trevor's religious views are much too serious to allow her to marry so worldly a man as my cousin."

"I should be afraid, too," said Sir Allyne, "that Forster is marrying her solely for her wealth, though I would never say this to any one but yourself. He is not a man to appreciate, rightly, anything so perfect as Miss Trevor. It is quite a sin to sacrifice her for a title, as I fear Lord and Lady Grey are doing. How I detest marriages made solely for money or rank!"

Emmeline was much surprised at her brother's unusual warmth, but made no further remark

than to enquire who had told him this piece of news.

"Eveline herself," replied Sir Allyne; "and asked me what I thought of her future sister-in-law.

"Have you seen Forster since?" gently asked Emmeline.

"No; I left town a few days after, and have been too well employed with my improvements here to give him much of my thoughts; but I am annoyed, I must confess, at *my* name and *myself* being so easily disposed of."

"This, dear, will naturally be the case until you do marry, Allyne, you must be well aware. But tell me," continued Emmeline (glad to change a subject by no means interesting to her, and that she saw was very unpleasing to her brother), "and you really intend to cut down these fine old trees?"

"Why, yes," replied Allyne; "but for these trees you would have here the most beautiful view of the surrounding country, and I have often thought a seat in this spot would be pleasant as a sort of halt, after a somewhat long walk round my plantation. You will allow that you yourself, now, would have no objection to a seat," and her brother smiled.

"Nevertheless," answered his sister, "I would spare the trees. I can remember them as long as I can remember anything; though I admit the improvement to be just, I am most averse to cutting down trees."

Allyne did not reply immediately, and they walked

on further to other objects of proposed alteration. They were here met by Mr. Tudor, who had been in search of Emmeline. After proceeding a little way together, Sir Allyne left them to take his usual ride. He had proceeded some way, with his horse's rein allowed to lay negligently on the beautiful animal's neck, pursuing his course leisurely, more to enjoy the pleasant afternoon than for any particular object in view, when a stone, thrown with evident violence, as he was entering the village of Nutleigh, hitting the fore leg of the blood animal on which he was riding, and caused him to plunge and rear so suddenly as nearly to throw Sir Allyne, who had but just time to draw him up. He turned to see from whence the stone came, and who might be the aggressor, when a little head peeped up from behind a hedge, but seemed ashamed to come forward. Sir Allyne dismounted, and examined, with some anxiety, the knee of the horse, still smarting under the blow; seeing the boy, he called to him, and enquired who he was, and if it was him who had thrown the stone.

"No, please your honour," replied the little fellow, advancing, with more courage than before, from his hiding-place; "it was John Morrison who threw the stone; he threw it at me, sir, and it struck your horse. I saw it, for I hid myself in the hedge, to prevent its killing me."

"It is fortunate he has not injured my horse more than giving it a fright," returned Sir Allyne, "which

might have been the cause of his throwing me. It is very wrong to throw stones at one another; what were you quarrelling about?"

"Please your honour," rejoined the boy, "I wasn't quarrelling. I was just taking the cows out of the field for father, and Johnny met me, and began taunting and teazing me for going (here the boy coloured) to Everton church, sir, instead of Nutleigh. We lives in Nutleigh, and John Morrison says if we lives in a place we ought to go to the church of the place; but mother has left off going to Nutleigh, because she says the church there is no longer the Church of England. Johnny would have it mother and father were Methodists and Dissenters, because they didn't go to Nutleigh, and liked Mr. Graham best (he that's dead, sir). I got angry, please your honour, for mother and father ben't Methodists nor Dissenters; they likes church, and never goes to chapel; but they doesn't like Romish worship, likes up there, sir—so I told Johnny, whose father, sir, is Mr. Priestley's sexton, and he struck me, and I gave him a blow in return. He ran off, sir, throwing that there stone you saw, that hit your horse, which he meant for me."

Sir Allyne smiled at the boy's ingenuous story, and told him he should call at Morrison's, and warn him about his son's throwing stones (adding, as he gave the boy a little fourpenny-piece, that his father and mother were quite right in liking Everton church), and rode on.

"I will," thought Sir Allyne, "just call and enquire for poor Eustace," as he passed the picturesque but gloomy priory which stood almost at the entrance of Nutleigh, "and then take Paington Abbey on my road home, and pay the Fitzwilliams a visit."

The usual answer, "that Mr. Priestley was much the same, and her ladyship unable to see any one," was the reply he received to the enquiries he made from the servant at the door, and Allyne turned his horse's head towards Paington; his thoughts divided between the painful reflections connected with Eustace Priestley's misguided views on religion, and the sad consequences it had entailed. Poor Ethell, too, and her unhappy lot! What a contrast between that of self-working dependence, which bondages the liberty of the conscience and weakens the mind, with the sustaining and cheering faith of his Aunt Vivian, so full of hope and peace, because based on the truest of foundations—Jesus, and Him alone!

He had almost reached the lodge-gates, when he was interrupted in his meditations by Sir James Fitzwilliam himself, on his road home.

"Shall I find Lady Fitzwilliam?" enquired the young man. "I have a message for her from my sister, which I promised to deliver myself. She was anxious to have called at the Abbey before this, but has not been quite well the last few days, and is leaving me to-morrow, with my brother-in-law, for the north."

"Lady Fitzwilliam will be very glad to see you, my dear Sir Allyne," replied the kind-hearted Baronet. "I often feel we are much, too much strangers, neighbours as we are. I have just come from the Rectory. We expect Arthur and Marion at the Abbey on Saturday, and early next week the young people take possession of their new home and new duties! My daughter Anne, and Sir David Hamilton are on a visit just now to meet the bride, and I hope, Sir Allyne, you will also join the party."

They had by this time reached the lodge gates, and entered the beautiful approach through an avenue of the most stately oaks, which led to this magnificent baronial residence. Lady Fitzwilliam received Sir Allyne with kindness; her pride and haughtiness of bearing had given place to a gentle dignity of manner, though reserved as formerly. They found her and Lady Hamilton in the drawing room, engaged with other visitors; the latter Allyne had not seen since her marriage, some three years back. He delivered Mrs. Tudor's excuse for not calling, and begged to offer his congratulations on his cousin's marriage, observing,

"I hardly know which (if I may venture to say so), to congratulate most, my cousin, or your daughter, Lady Fitzwilliam. Arthur is the best fellow I know, and we are very fortunate to have him at Everton, to replace our lamented Mr. Graham. His amiable assistant will be a double advantage, it was always to be regretted that the former was unmarried."

Various conversation followed, and, at length, Sir Allyne rose to take his leave, promising to dine at the Abbey the following Saturday. His attention was arrested at this moment towards a very prettily executed water-colour drawing of Everton Church, which he stopped to look at for a minute (an excuse at the same time perhaps, too) for taking a nearer survey of a beautiful oilpainting, representing two young girls, one of whose features seemed familiar to him.

"That is, as you see, a little painting of Everton Church," said Lady Hamilton, rising to answer Sir Allyne's apparent admiration of it, "done by my dear cousin, Edith Trevor. At the time this picture was done of her," she continued, pointing to the before-named portraits in oil, "she was residing with us, and is there with my sister Marion, 'the two inseparables,' as we used to call them. Edith is much improved since that was done of her. You have seen her more recently than I have, Sir Allyne; tell me, do you see in it any resemblance still?"

Sir Allyne paused for a moment; it was a sweet innocent likeness of a young girl between childhood and womanhood, and the resemblance was yet very faithful, but the original was sweeter still.

"It preserves its truthfulness," replied Sir Allyne, "it is beautifully executed, and must be very valuable to her own family. I hardly know whether I have been rightly informed, that Miss Trevor is engaged to be married to Lord Foster. Is it true, Lady Hamilton?"

"Oh, by no means; very much the contrary," she replied. "To be very honest, Sir Allyne, and I am sure, in detailing the facts of this silly report to you, it will go no further, Lord Foster *did* propose for Edith to my uncle, but was *refused*; and though he is a cousin of yours, I hope you will pardon my saying that I am not surprised at Edith's rejection of him; his lordship would have been very ill suited to her."

Why did Sir Allyne remount his horse so lightly, and ride so much faster homewards, towards Everton, than when he left it early that afternoon? and why was he so buried in thought, that several times his sister spoke to him in the course of the evening without obtaining any answer? It was not until she had more than once told him, at the hour of prayer, that the servants were assembled and waiting for him as usual to officiate, that he roused himself, and recovered his abstraction. The sequel will show the real cause of this. . . . .

The sun shines brightly on Gainsboro' Castle; the birds are singing rapturously; the soft blue sky unclouded; the bees, with their busy hum, extracting rapidly their sweets from flower to flower, all whispering, as it were, together something more than usual, while nature is arousing herself to usher in a lovely day, of more than ordinary beauty! And if all without bespeaks joy and gladness; if creation, with its variety of inanimate objects, appears decked in its brightest and best, all within the Castle is happiness

and rejoicing. It is early, but every one is astir. People are passing to and fro, and the sounds of unmistakeable and joyous activity may be seen and heard from all quarters. It is Edith Trevor's wedding day! There is dear Aunt Catherine—the venerable Lady Catherine Douglas—come all the way from the Grange to be present at her loved grand-niece's marriage; Aunt Emily, too, and Uncle Montague. There is Arthur Vivian and his newly married wife, the pretty Marion, Lady Ann Effingham, and half the county are assembled to witness the happy ceremony. Lady Lucy Foster, two of the Miss Effinghams, and Minnie Livingstone are Edith's chosen bridesmaids. And to whom (my readers may perhaps wish to know) is our heroine about to be united? If they have not already guessed, I must inform them—to no other than Sir Allyne Vivian.

He had long, as we have seen, admired Edith's character, and had been most sincere in his desire to cultivate a more intimate acquaintance with her, which their mutual stay in town gave ample opportunity of doing; and it was not until he found Edith's society becoming more and more fascinating and essential to him, that he was told of some engagement existing between her and Lord Forster, *his* cousin, the Lady Eveline, being his informant. It was not unnatural for Sir Allyne to believe this to be true, as Miss Trevor was usually to be seen in the world with this young nobleman at her side, and the information coming from the quarter it did, seemed to

leave the fact beyond a doubt. He therefore, withdrew from that constant intercourse with her, which would now be more than dangerous to him to cultivate any further. Sir Allyne's was too upright and noble a mind to suppose that interested motives could have influenced his cousin to feign the untruth she told him; he had never, for one instant, suspected (accustomed as he was to such habitual intimacy with his uncle's family) that Lady Eveline *might have had a wish* to please him herself. However true that might have been shown, he quitted London soon after, and though the remembrance of the gentle and amiable being, who had made more than a passing impression upon him, would frequently be present to his imagination, he endeavoured by occupying himself in the various improvements he was planning on his own property, to obliterate the remembrance of what, under present circumstances, would be useless. Sir Allyne's visit, however, to the Abbey, and conversation with Lady Hamilton, had strangely enlightened him, and the utter falsity of Lady Eveline's information, was clearly shown out. It *was*, then, true that Lord Forster had been refused, and this because Edith *did not* care for him. The door, then, was now open to him; and he lost no time in making known his feelings to her father. Lord Grey received his letter at Gainsborough Castle, somewhere about a fortnight after Mrs. Tudor had left Everton; and Lord Grey's answer was, the permission to Sir Allyne, to join the family, which he im-

mediately did, and became at once the happy and accepted *affiancé* of Edith, who had returned to her father and kind step-mother, as had been previously agreed, on their return to the country, from her visit to her Uncle and Aunt Montagu, at Hereford. She now saw the reward of patient waiting upon her heavenly Father in the sad moment of her bitter disappointment. She had committed that matter to Him, and He had brought about a result as unexpected as it was joyous to poor Edith. Educated as she had been with her cousin, Marion Vivian, how pleasant it was to her that they would not be far separated, the Rectory at Everton being almost at the extremity of the pretty village, and Sir Allyne's demesne extending to its very doors.

"How pretty she looks! how beaming her countenance, dear, sweet, young lady! God bless her!" burst from many of the poor assembled to see their young mistress married.

Mr. Livingstone performed the ceremony, at Edith's own request; he had been her dear mother's friend, and she liked the idea that he should cement her earthly happiness, by uniting her to the being she loved. Gainsborough Church and the road to it, were literally bestrewed with flowers; and Edith's school children, dressed all in white, were permitted to witness the ceremony. The eldest of them presented her, on leaving the Church, with a magnificent *bouquet* of the choicest flowers.

Nor did Edith, in all her happiness, forget her

poor old nurse, Budd, as the poor woman folded her again in her arms, with all the tenderness of a mother, calling her her darling, and repeating blessing after blessing upon her.

"I commend you, my dear nurse, to Minnie Livingstone," said she, "until I am established in my new home; when I shall send for you to live with me. You have been too long a tried and faithful friend for us ever to part; and Sir Allyne is so good, he wishes you as well to live in our own house."

"Blessings on him, my darling; blessings on you both!".

Amidst prayers and blessings from all sides, Edith was at length assisted by her father into the travelling carriage, awaiting the happy pair at the Church-door, and Sir Allyne taking his place at her side, they left Gainsborough Castle for Everton.

And with Sir Allyne and Lady Vivian's happy marriage and settlement at Everton, my story ends.

But before I finally take leave of my readers, I must satisfy their, perhaps, only natural desire to know the fate of the others who have acted their part in my little drama, which shall be briefly told.

Eustace Priestley—the ill-fated Eustace Priestley—did not long survive the total loss of his once brilliant and highly cultivated intellect; before Arthur Vivian and his amiable wife had been a year at the Rectory, he died.

His wife, the unhappy Lady Ethell, strengthened

very much in her Tractarian views by one of he husband's curates (who had undertaken his duty, under his most distressing affliction), became very shortly after her bereavement a Roman Catholic, and entered a convent near Paris, as a professed Nun, whither in the first moment of her grief, she had gone to her sister Adelaide, who, as we before stated, had married a foreigner, having changed her religion for his.

Mr. Priestley's two curates, we are told, became Priests of the Romish Church. The Priory was put up for sale, being private property, and Sir Allyne Vivian became the purchaser.

Lady Ethell's youngest sister, the Lady Lucy Forster, became, at a later period, the wife of Mr. Livingstone's only son, with whom she made acquaintauce when on a visit to Edith, on her return from Hereford to her father's house.

But it was not without difficulty, however, that she obtained Lord Hetherington's sanction to her marriage with Cecil Livingstone; but she had been so good a daughter, he said, he could refuse her nothing. Presenting, therefore, the young man with a good Living, he no longer withheld his consent.

Her sisters did not marry, but she had the happiness of being made instrumental to their real conversion of heart. Both Lady Eveline and Lady Mary became as zealous in their support of Truth as they had been in the propagation of Error.

One word of Mildred Vernon, now de Vere, before the scene closes.

Her marriage was as happy a one as could be wished. She was the very joy of Lord and Lady Camhays, who could not but congratulate their son on his happy choice of so amiable a person.

Mr. and Mrs. Vernon lived near them, and lived to see Mildred the happy mother of many children.

The Rectory of Everton is the abode of Sunshine, Marion ever assisting and gladdening her husband's return (from the oft fatiguing duties of his parish), with her happy smiles. Her flower-garden rivals the one at the Park, for she is always gardening when she can steal a moment from her various duties as a clergyman's wife—which are never for an instant neglected. Mrs. Vivian passes much of her time with her son and daughter, more and more convinced of the truth, that it is true religion only that can give solid happiness.

Sir Allyne and Lady Vivian are ever ready and anxious to enter into any good work proposed by Arthur or Marion, for the circulation and advance of religious truth around them, being well assured that the first duty, next to God, of every Christian, is to his neighbour; that they who have largely received the knowledge of the Truth, should as largely distribute the same, and fully persuaded that the Clouds of darkness, ignorance, and superstition can alone be dispersed effectually by the glorious Sunshine of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

THE END.

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